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VOLUME 23

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OF THE

HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH,

ANTERIOR TO THE DIVISION OF THE EAST AND WEST.

TRANSLATED BY MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

YET SHALL NOT THY TEACHERS BE REMOVED INTO A CORNER ANY MORE, BUT THINE EYES SHALL SEE THY TEACHERS. *Isaiah* XXX. 20.

OXFORD,
JOHN HENRY PARKER;
F. AND J. RIVINGTON, LONDON.
MDCCCXLVII.

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TO THE

MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

WILLIAM

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MORALS

ON

THE BOOK OF JOB,

BY

S. GREGORY THE GREAT,

THE FIRST POPE OF THAT NAME,

TRANSLATED,

WITH NOTES AND INDICES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

THE FIRST PART OF VOL. III.
PART V. AND BOOKS XXVIII, XXIX.

OXFORD,
JOHN HENRY PARKER;
F. AND J. RIVINGTON, LONDON.
MDCCCXLVII.

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BOOK XXIII.

The thirty-second chapter, and the thirty-third, as far as the twenty-second verse, are expounded; in which, while Job keeps silence, Eliu, a younger person, enters on many right and sound topics, though not rightly, or with sound intention.

1. It is necessary for me to repeat the preface of this work, as often as I divide it into separate volumes, by making a pause in my observations, it order that when it is again begun to be read, the subject of the Treatise may be at once brought afresh to the memory; and that the edifice of teaching may rise the more firmly, the more carefully the foundation is laid in the mind, from considering the first beginning of the subject. Blessed Job, known to God and himself alone in his state of tranquillity, when he was to be brought before our notice, was smitten with a rod, in order that he might scatter more widely the odour of his strength, the more sweetly he gave forth his scent, as spices, from the burning. He had learned in his prosperity to rule over his subjects with gentleness, and to guard himself strictly from evil. He had learned how to use the things he had got: but we could not tell whether he would remain patient under their loss. He had learned to offer daily sacrifices to God for the safety of his children, but it was doubtful, whether he would also offer Him the sacrifice of thanksgiving when he was bereft of them. For fear then that sound health should conceal any defect, it was proper that pain should bring it to light. Permission then to practise temptation against the holy man is given to the crafty foe. But he, in seeking to destroy his i.

Job 32, 1. goods which were known to many, brings to light the virtue of patience also which was lying hid, and whom he believed he was pressing hard by his persecutions, he magnified him by his scourges, and far extended him in example. And he exercised with great skill the permission he had received. For he burnt his herds, destroyed his family, overwhelmed his heirs, and, in order to launch against him a weapon of severer temptation, he kept in store the tongue of his wife: that thus he might both lay low the bold and firm heart of the holy man with grief, by the loss of his goods, and pierce it through with a curse, by the words of his wife. But by the many wounds he inflicted in his cruelty, he unintentionally furnished as many triumphs to the holy man. For the faithful servant of God, involved in wounds and reproaches at one and the same time, both endued with patience the sufferings of the flesh, and reproved with wisdom the folly of his wife. The ancient enemy, therefore, because he was grieved at being foiled by him in his domestic trials, proceeded to seek for help from abroad. He summoned, therefore, his friends, each from his own place, as if for the purpose of displaying their affection, and opened their lips, under the pretence of giving consolation. But, by these very means, he launched against him shafts of reproach, which would wound more severely the heart of him who securely listened to them, inasmuch as they were inflicting an unexpected wound beneath the cover of a friendship which was professed and not observed. After these, also, Eliu a younger person is urged on even to use insult, in order that the scornful levity of his youth might at all events disturb the tranquillity of such great gentleness. But against these many machinations of the ancient enemy his constancy stood unconquered, his equanimity unbroken. For at one and the same time he opposed his prudence to their hostile words, his conduct to their doings. Let no one then suppose that this holy man (although it was expressly written of him after his scourging, *In all these things Job sinned not with his lips*) sinned afterwards, at least, in his words in his dispute with his friends. For Satan aimed at his temptation, but God, Who had praised him, took on Himself the purport of that contest. If any one, therefore, complains that blessed

Job 1, 2.

Job sinned in his words, what else does he do, but confess that God, Who pledged Himself for him, had been the loser. Book XXIII.

2. But since the ancient fathers, like fruitful trees, are not merely beauteous in appearance, but also profitable through their fertility, their life must be so considered by us, that when we admire the freshness of their history, we may learn also how fruitful they are in allegory, in order that, since the smell of their leaves is pleasant, we may learn also how sweet is the taste of their fruits. For no one ever possessed the grace of heavenly adoption but he who has received it through the knowledge of the Only-begotten. It is right then that He should shine forth in their life and words, Who so enlightens them that they may be able[1] to shine. For when the light of a candle is kindled in the dark, the candle, which causes other objects to be seen, is first seen itself. And so, if we are truly endeavouring to behold the objects which are enlightened, it is neeessary for us to open the eyes of our mind to that Lightening which gives them light. But it is this which shines forth in these very discourses of blessed Job, when the shades of allegory too have been driven away, as though the gloom of midnight had been dispelled, a bright light as it were flaming across them. As when it is said, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in my flesh I shall see God.* Paul had doubtless discovered this light in the night of history, when he said, *All were baptized in Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual meat, and all drank the same spiritual drink. But they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, but the Rock was Christ.* If then the Rock represented the Redeemer, why should not blessed Job suggest the type of Him, since he signified in his suffering Him Whom he spake of in his voice? And hence he is not improperly called *Job*, that is to say, " grieving," because he sets forth in his own person the image of Him, of Whom it is announced long before by Isaiah, that He Himself *bore our griefs.* It should be further known, that our Redeemer has represented Himself as one Person with Holy Church, whom He has assumed to Himself. For it is said of Him, *Which is the Head, even Christ.* And again it is written of His Church; *And the body of Christ, which is the Church.*

[1] merebantur

Job 19, 25.

1 Cor. 10, 2-4.

Is. 53, 4.

Eph. 4, 15. Col. 1, 24.

Job 32, 1. Blessed Job therefore, who was more truly a type of Christ, since he prophesied of His passion, not by words only, but also by his sufferings, when he dwells on setting forth the Redeemer in his words and deeds, is sometimes suddenly turning to signify His body; in order that, as we believe Christ and His Church to be one Person, we may behold this signified also by the actions of a single man.

3. But what else is signified by his wife, who provokes him to words of blasphemy, but the depravity of carnal men? For placed, with yet unreformed manners, within the pale of the Holy Church, they press harder on those of faithful lives, the nearer they are to them; because when they cannot as being faithful be avoided by the faithful, they are endured as a greater evil, the more inward it is. But his friends, who while pretending to advise, inveigh against him, represent to us heretics, who under the pretence of advising, carry on the business of leading astray. And thus while speaking to Job on behalf of the Lord, they hear His reproof; because all heretics in truth while endeavouring to maintain God's cause, do in fact offend Him. Whence also it is properly said to them by the same holy man, *I desire to reason with God, first shewing that ye are forgers of lies, and followers of corrupt doctrines.* It is plain then that they typify heretics, since the holy man accuses them of being devoted to the profession of false doctrines. And since Job is by interpretation grieving, (for by his grief is set forth either the passion of the Mediator, or the travails of Holy Church, which is harassed by the manifold labours of this present life,) so do his friends also by the very word which is used for their names set forth the nature of their conduct. For Eliphaz signifies in Latin "contempt of God;" and what else is the conduct of heretics than a proud contempt of God by the false notions they entertain of Him? Bildad is interpreted "oldness alone." And well are all heretics termed oldness alone, in the things they speak of God, since they are anxious to appear preachers, not with any honest intention, but with an earnest desire after worldly honour. For they are urged to speak not by the zeal of the new man, but by the evil principles of their old life. Sophar too is called in Latin 'dissipation of the prospect,' or a 'dissipating of

Job 13, 3. 4.

the prospect.' For the minds of the faithful raise themselves to the contemplation of things above: but when the words of the heretics endeavour to draw them aside from the right objects of contemplation, they do their best to dissipate the prospect. In the three names then of Job's friends, there are set forth three cases of the ruin of heretics. For did they not despise God, they would never entertain false notions respecting Him; and did they not contract oldness, they would not err in their estimate of the new life; and unless they marred the contemplation of the good, the divine judgments would not have reproved them with so strict a scrutiny, for the faults which they committed in their words. By despising God then, they keep themselves in their oldness: but by remaining in their oldness, they obstruct the view of them that are right by their crooked discoursing. Book XXIII.

4. After these also, Eliu, a younger person, is joined to them in their reproaches of blessed Job. In his person is represented a class of teachers, who are faithful, but yet arrogant. Nor do we easily understand his words, unless we consider them by the help of the subsequent reproof of the Lord. *Who is he that involves sentences in unskilful words?* for when He uses the word 'sentences,' but does not immediately subjoin of what nature they are, He intends the word without doubt to be understood favourably. For when 'sentences' are spoken of, unless they are said to be bad, they cannot be understood in a bad sense. For we always take the word in a good sense, if no unfavourable addition is made; as it is written, *A slothful man seems wiser in his own opinion than seven men uttering sentences.* But by its being said that his sentences are involved in unskilful language, it is plainly shewn that they were uttered by him with the folly of pride. For it is a great unskilfulness in him, to be unable to express himself with humility in what he says, and to blend with sentiments of truth the words of pride. Job 38, 2. Prov. 26, 16.

5. For the nature of every thing that is said can be distinguished by four different qualities. If, for instance, either bad things are said badly, good things well, bad things well, or good things badly. A bad thing is badly said, when wrong advice is given; as it is written, *Curse God, and die.* Job 2, 9.

Job 32, 1. A good thing is well said, when right matters are rightly preached; as John says, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* A bad thing is well spoken, when a fault is adduced by the speaker, simply to be reproved; as Paul says, *The women changed their natural use into that which is against nature.* In which place he subjoined too the execrable doings of men. But he related these unseemly things in a seemly way, that by telling of things unbecoming, he might reveal many to the practice of what is becoming. But a good thing is ill spoken, when what is proper is brought forward with an improper object; as the Pharisees are reported to have said to the blind man who had received his sight, *Be thou His disciple;* for they said this for the express purpose of reproaching him, not as wishing what they said; or as Caiaphas says, *It is expedient that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation perish not.* It was a good thing which he said, but not with good view; for while he longed for His cruel death, he prophesied the grace of redemption. And in like manner Eliu also is reproved for saying right things in a wrong way: because in the very truths which he utters he is puffed up with arrogance. And he represents thereby the character of the arrogant, because through a sense of what is right he rises up into words of pride.

Matt. 3, 2.

Rom. 1, 26.

John 9, 28.

John 11, 50.

6. But what is meant by the Divine Voice directing that the three friends should be reconciled by seven sacrifices, while it leaves Eliu only beneath the reproof of a single sentence; except it be that heretics, when bedewed with the superabundance of Divine grace, sometimes return to the unity of Holy Church? This is excellently set forth by the very reconciliation of the friends, for whom nevertheless blessed Job is directed to pray. Because in truth the sacrifices of heretics cannot be acceptable to God, unless they be offered for them by the hands of the Church Catholic, that they may gain a healing remedy by her merits, whom they used to smite by attacking her with the shafts of their reproaches. And thence is it that seven sacrifices are said to have been offered for them, because whilst they receive on confession the Spirit of sevenfold grace, they are atoned for, as it were, by seven oblations. Wherefore in the

Apocalypse of John, the whole Church is represented by the sevenfold number of the Churches: and hence is it that Solomon speaks thus of Wisdom, *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.* The heretics then on their reconciliation express, by the very number of the sacrifices, their own former character, since it is only by their returning that they are united to the perfection of sevenfold grace. But they are properly represented as having offered for themselves bulls and rams. For in a bull is designated the neck of pride, in a ram the leading of the flocks that follow. What then is the offering of bulls and rams on their behalf, but the destruction of their proud leadership, that they may think humbly of themselves, and not seduce any longer the hearts of the innocent to follow them? For they had started aside with swelling neck from the general body of the Church, and were drawing after them the weakminded, as flocks following their guidance. Let them come then to blessed Job, that is, let them return to the Church, and offer bulls and rams to be slaughtered for a sevenfold sacrifice, who in order to be united to the Church Catholic, by the coming in of a spirit of humility, have to put an end to whatever swelling thoughts they before used to entertain from their haughty leadership.

Book XXIII.
Rev. 1, 11.
Prov. 9, 1.

7. But Eliu (by whom are designated those lovers of vain-glory who, living within the pale of the Church, scorn to state in a humble way the sound views which they hold) is not directed to be reconciled by sacrifice. For those who are proud, and yet faithful, because they are already within the pale, cannot be brought back by seven sacrifices. Yet the divine wisdom reproves these people in the person of Eliu, and blames in them not their sentences of truth, but their temper and language of pride. But what is the meaning of the reproof, except that the chiding of the divine severity chastens them with scourges as placed within the Church, or by a righteous judgment leaves them to themselves? For such as these preach the truth within the Church, but, in the judgment of God, deserve to hear an unfavourable sentence, because by the sound truths which they state, which are not their own, they seek not the glory of their author, but their own credit. We must therefore

Job 32, 1. Job 38, 2. carefully weigh this passage, in which it is said by the Divine Voice respecting Elin, *Who is he?* An interrogation of this kind is but the beginning of a reproof. For we say not, *Who is he*, except of a person of whom we are ignorant. But God's ignorance is the same as His rejection: whence He will at the end say to some whom He rejects, Mat. 7, 23. *I know you not whence you are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.* To ask then of this haughty man, *Who is he?* what is it but plainly to say, I know not the haughty? that is, In the excellence of My wisdom I approve not of their doings, because, by being puffed up by human praise, they are bereft of the true glory of eternal reward. By not rejecting then his sentiments, but blaming the person who uttered them, He plainly teaches, as it were saying, I know what he says, but I know not the speaker: I approve of whatever is stated in accordance with truth, but I acknowledge not him who is elated by the truths he utters.

8. But to shew more plainly how disgracefully Elin falls away in boastfulness of pride, we ought in the first place to set forth the character of a sound teacher; that from the straightness of this standard the deformity of his distortion may be clearly manifested. Every spiritual preacher then of the Church Catholic carefully examines himself in every thing he says, lest he should be elated with the sin of pride on account of his sound preaching; lest his conduct should be at variance with his words; lest that very peace which he preaches in the Church he should lose in his own person, by sound speaking and evil living. But it is his chief endeavour against the calumnious rumours of the adversaries to defend his conduct by his preaching, and to adorn his preaching by his life. And in all this he seeks not his own glory, but that of His Maker; and considers that every gift of wisdom he has received for the purpose of preaching, as bestowed not for his own deserts, but through the intercessions of those for whom he speaks. And thus while he casts himself down, he rises higher and higher; because he doubtless makes greater progress in gaining his own reward, by ascribing to the merits of others the good gifts he is able to exercise. He counts himself unworthy of all men, even when he lives more worthily than all together. For he is

aware that the good qualities which are known to the world at large, can hardly exist in him without great peril. And though he feels himself to be wise, he would wish to be really wise without appearing so: and is especially afraid of that which is spoken of and gets abroad. And he seeks, if possible, to be silent, from perceiving that silence is safer for many, and considers that they are happier, whom a lower part in Holy Church conceals in silence; and though, in defence of the Church, he takes on himself of necessity the duty of speaking, because he is urged by the force of charity, yet he seeks with earnest longing the rest of silence. The one he maintains as a matter of wish, the other he exercises as a matter of duty. But of such ways of speaking the proud are ignorant. For they speak not because causes arise, but seek for them to arise in order that they may speak. Of such Eliu is now a type, who in what he says sets himself up beyond measure, through the sin of pride. When the words then of blessed Job were ended it is added, *These three men ceased to answer Job, because he seemed just in his own eyes.* Job 32, 1.

Book XXIII.

In the expression, *because he seemed to be just in his own eyes*, the author of this sacred history intended to refer to the opinion of Job's friends, and did not himself accuse him of being puffed up with pride. It follows:

Ver. 2. *And Eliu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram, was wroth and indignant.*

9. The names either of himself, or of his parent, of his home, or kindred, furnish a mark of his own conduct. For Eliu being interpreted means, "That my God," or, "God the Lord." By whom, as we said to you, is designated the sound faith of proud men placed within the Church. Whence this very name of his is suited to them also. For though they live not according to the commandments of the Lord, they yet recognise God as their Lord, because in the truth of His flesh they realize also the form of the Godhead, as is said by the Prophet, *Know ye that the Lord He is God.* Ps. 100, 3. But Barachel, signifies when interpreted, "The blessing of God," but Buzite, "contemptible." And either of these expressions is well suited to proud preachers: because in the eloquence of their speech they enjoy the blessing of

ii.

Job 32, 3. Divine Grace, but in their proud manners they shew that it is to be despised. For the gifts which they have received they render contemptible, by not knowing how to use them rightly. But he is fitly said to be also of the kindred of Ram. For Ram signifies "lofty." For lofty is the assembly of the faithful, which despises the low and abject things of this life. Phil. 3, 20. Lofty are they who can say with Paul, *Our conversation is in heaven.* Eliu therefore is said to be 'of the kindred of Ram,' because every haughty preacher within the bosom of the Church Catholic, is united to the holy People in the verity of the faith, however he may be separated from them in conduct by the sinfulness of his pride. It follows,

But he was angry against Job, because he said he was just before God. Moreover against his friends was he wroth, because they had not found reasonable answers, but had merely condemned Job.

iii. 10. It must be carefully observed, that he blames blessed Job for professing himself just before God, but his friends because in condemning him they gave no reasonable reply. For it is plainly inferred, from these marks, that in him are characterized the lovers of vain glory. For he convicts Job of presuming on his righteousness, his friends of making a foolish answer. For all lovers of vain glory, while they prefer themselves to all other, accuse some of folly, others of obtaining what they do not deserve: that is, they consider some to be ignorant, others to be evil livers. And though they may justly accuse of heresy all who are external to the Church, yet they despise those who are within for the meanness of their life, and pride themselves against the one from high notions of their sound faith, against the others as if from the merits of their good living. But Eliu is well said to reprove at one time blessed Job, and at another time his friends: because the lovers of vain glory, living at times within the pale of Holy Church, both crush her opponents by preaching the truth, and oppose the customs of the same Holy Church in boasting of their preaching. They overwhelm the opponents of the Church by the power of their words, they oppress Holy Church by the way in which they utter them. They assail the one by preaching the truth, the other by their sin of pride. It follows,

Ver. 4, 5. *Elihu therefore waited while Job was speaking,* Book XXIII.
because they who were speaking were his elders. But when he had seen that the three were not able to answer, he was very wroth.

11. Though Holy Church is unquestionably older than her adversaries, (for they went forth from her, not she from them, as is said of them by John, *They went out from us, but they were not of us,*) yet Eliu is properly described as having been younger than these same adversaries. Because in truth after the contests which arose with heretics, haughty men began to have place in the Church, puffed up with the pride of learning. For when more grievous contests commenced with the enemy, there were certainly required some subtle dart-points of thought, oppositions of arguments, and a more involved research of words. And while men of glowing genius invent these weapons to suit the circumstances, they are frequently puffed up with pride, and (as is generally the case in the sin of pride) they are themselves made to fall by the same subtle meanings with which they assail the foe, while in what they think aright concerning God, they seek not God's glory, but their own. And hence is it that though Eliu says many things aright, he is yet reproved by the Divine voice, as though he had stated errors. But when it is said that Eliu waited while Job was speaking, because they who were speaking were his elders, it is plain that he observed this respect to blessed Job not out of reverence for him, but for his friends; because, namely, haughty men though dwelling within Holy Church, despise that very body which they defend; and it is commonly the case that they pay greater respect to the abilities of those who are wise to an evil purpose, than to the simple life of the innocent; and that they shew greater regard to the eloquence of those without, than to the deserts of those within. And this, though they are opposed to both in opposite ways, as differing from the one in the soundness of their opinion, and from Holy Church in the perverseness of their character. It proceeds, iv. 1 John 2, 19.

Ver. 6, 7. *And Eliu the son of Barachel, the Buzite, answered and said, I am younger in age, but ye are more ancient. I therefore held down my head, and feared to shew*

Job 32, 8. *you my opinion. For I was hoping that greater age would speak, and that a multitude of years would teach wisdom.*

12. All these words, which are uttered by him through swelling pride, must be rather glanced at by the way than expounded more attentively. For whatsoever is deficient in solid gravity, needs not any elaborate exposition. But I think I need only suggest in a few words, that Eliu was more wise, as long as he remained silent on account of his age, but that in despising a multitude of years in others, and setting himself above them, he shewed plainly his childish folly. For both greater age speaks, against his opinion, and wisdom is taught by multitude of years. Because, though length of life does not confer intelligence, yet it gives it much exercise by constant practice. It follows,

Ver. 8. *But, as I see, there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.*

vi. 13. He would be right in saying this, did he not arrogate to himself this same wisdom above all others. For it is no slight[1] condemnation for a man to boast within himself of that advantage which is given to him in common with others, to know whence he has received a good gift, and to know not how to use the good he has received. For there are four marks by which every kind of pride of the arrogant is pointed out, either when they think that they possess any good quality from themselves, or if they believe that it is given them from above, yet that they have received it in consequence of their own merits, or unquestionably when they boast of possessing that which they have not, or when they despise others, and wish to appear the sole possessors of what they have. For he boasted that he possessed his good qualities from himself, to whom it is said by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4, 7. *But what hast thou which thou didst not receive? why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* Again, the same Apostle warns us not to believe that any gift of grace is given Eph. 2, 8. 9. us for our precedent deserts, when he says, *By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any one should boast.* 1 Tim. 1, 13. Who says also of himself, *Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and contumelious: but I obtained mercy.*

[a] Per. 'prava,' a misprint for 'parva.'

For in these words he plainly declares, that grace is not given according to desert, when he taught us both what he deserved of himself for his evil deeds, and what he obtained by God's benevolence. But again, some persons boast that they have that which they really have not, as the Divine Voice speaks of Moab by the Prophet; *I know his pride and his arrogance, and that his virtue is not according to it.* Jer. 48, 30. And as is said to the Angel of the Church of Laodicea, *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Rev. 3, 17. Some again wish, in contempt of others, to appear to be the sole possessors of the good qualities which they have. Whence also the Pharisee went down from the temple without being justified, because by ascribing to himself as if in a singular manner the merit of good works, he preferred himself to the suppliant publican. The holy Apostles also are warned against this sin of pride; for on returning from their preaching, and saying with pride, *Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy name,* Luke 10, 17. to keep them from rejoicing in this singular gift of miracles, the Lord at once replied to them, saying, *I beheld Satan as lightning falling from heaven.* For he had himself said with special pride, *I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven, I will sit in the mount of the covenant, in the sides of the north; I will be like the Most High.* Is. 14, 13. 14. And the Lord, in order to bring down pride in the hearts of His disciples, related with wondrous wisdom the judgment of downfal, which the prince of pride himself underwent, that they might learn, from the author of pride, what they had to apprehend from the sin of haughtiness. In the fourth kind of pride then, namely, the boasting of the sole possession of any thing it possesses, the mind of man equally suffers a fall. But it is in this that it approaches more closely to a resemblance of Satan, because whoever rejoices at the singular possession of any good thing, whoever wishes to appear more exalted than others, plainly imitates him who in despising the blessing of the society of Angels, and placing his seat at the north, and proudly desiring to be like the Most High, endeavoured by his evil longing to shoot up to some singular preeminence. Eliu

Job 32, 12. 13. then, though confessing that wisdom is given by God, yet falls in this species of pride, so as to rejoice that he is wiser than others, and foolishly to pride himself on possessing, as it were, a singular advantage. Which he points out in the words which follow, when he says,

Ver. 9, 10, 11. *Old men are not wise, neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I will say, Hearken to me, I will shew you my wisdom. For I waited for your words, I heard your wisdom, whilst ye were disputing in words: and as long as I thought that ye said something, I considered.*

vii. 14. As far as regards the literal meaning, Eliu proves to us, when he speaks, how proudly he remained silent. For when he says, *For I waited for your words, and I was thinking that ye would say something*, he plainly shews that he remained silent, while the aged were speaking, rather with the desire of judging, than with the wish of learning from them. Though these expressions are even a better description of the conduct of proud men, who, when at length brought within Holy Church, are accustomed on looking at her opponents, to consider not so much the years of their age, as the intention of their words. For however older the heretics may be than these same haughty men, they boldly overbear those persons in whose words they reprove false doctrine. It follows,

Ver. 12, 13. *But, as I see, there is no one of you who can convince Job, and reply to his words. Lest ye should perchance say, We have found out wisdom; God hath cast him down, not man.*

viii. 15. Heretics, from the fact that they are wont to appear contemptible even to men, when they behold Holy Church reverenced by well-nigh all nations, endeavour to impugn the opinion entertained of her by every possible objection; and say that she enjoys all abundance of temporal goods, because the gifts of eternal rewards are taken from her. Eliu meets the objections of such people, by saying, *Lest ye should perchance say, We have found out wisdom; God hath cast him down, not man.* As if they who are found within the Church, but are yet faithful, should say against the heretics, Because ye see that the Church stands high in this world,

through the high opinion of men, ye must believe that God hath not cast her aside. For her Redeemer well knows how to administer comfort to her as she is travelling on in this her journey, and to keep in store for her the rewards of heaven, when she arrives at her eternal home. In vain then do ye assert that God hath cast her down, and not man, when ye behold her venerated by almost all men; because the aid of worldly distinction is conferred on her in order that she may be assisted thereby in manifold ways to gain also the rewards of heaven. It follows, BOOK XXIII.

Ver. 14. *He spake nothing to me, and I will not reply to him according to your words.*

16. What is meant by his saying, *He spake nothing to me?* For does holy Church, when she detects haughty men within her, ever omit to instruct and reprove them by preachers of righteousness? She exercises these duties, and ceases not to exercise them daily. But let Eliu, who had heard blessed Job speaking openly, say, *He spake nothing to me;* because doubtless, all haughty men, though they hear indeed the words of Holy Church, yet pretend that they are not addressed to them, when they make light of correcting the sin of pride. Nor do they think that they are reproved for their pride, for they look on themselves as humble; and they also make light of reproof, when they count themselves much wiser even than their reprovers. But in saying, *I will not answer him according to your words*, he well says that he does not answer blessed Job with their speeches. For proud men within the pale of Holy Church reply against her, but yet not as heretics who are without. For they oppose her not by false teaching, but by evil living, because they do not think unworthily of God, as do heretics, but more highly than is necessary of their own selves. It follows, ix.

Ver. 15. *They were afraid, they answered no more, they removed speech from themselves.*

The friends of Job are well said to have been afraid of the words of Eliu, since frequently proud defenders of the Church, though they do not observe due order in what they say, yet confound the adversaries by the very virtue of their words. It follows,

Job 32, 16. 17. Ver. 16. *Because therefore I have waited, and they have not spoken, they have stood, and have answered no more.*

x. 17. Wise men are accustomed to make it the limit of their speaking, to speak so far as to silence their adversaries. For they wish not to display their own powers, but to put down the teachers of heresy. But after it is said of the friends of Job, *They were afraid, they answered no more, they removed speech from themselves*, Eliu subjoins and says, *I have waited, and they have not spoken; they have stood, and have answered no more.* Even when they are already silent, he yet multiplies his words, because, being an arrogant man, and representing the character of the arrogant, he is in haste not merely to refute the arguments of his opponents, but to display his own wisdom. Whence it also follows,

Ver. 17. *I will also answer my part, and I will display my knowledge.*

For every proud man considers this to be his part, if he does not so much possess, as make a show of, knowledge. For all proud men are anxious not to possess knowledge, but to make a display of it: against whom Moses well says, Numb. 19, 15. *Every vessel which hath not a cover nor binding over it shall be unclean.* For the covering or the binding is the reproof of discipline, and every one who is not kept under by it is rejected as an unclean and polluted vessel. And was not Eliu a vessel without a cover, who had considered it to be his part to make a show of the wisdom which he possessed? For he who lays himself open by his desire of display, and is not covered by the veil of silence, is polluted as a vessel without cover or binding. But holy preachers consider that they are performing their part, if they rejoice in themselves at their own wisdom within, and if they outwardly keep back others from error. Nor do they so far go out of themselves in speaking, as to place the delight of their mind in an outward display of eloquent language. But they meditate on the benefits of wisdom in the secret of their heart, and there rejoice when they perceive it; and not when they are obliged to make it known amidst the snares of so many temptations. Although when they make known the good which they receive, yet charity steps in, and they rejoice at the progress of their hearers, and not at their own display. But the

arrogant on gaining any knowledge think that they have gained nothing, if it so happens that they keep it concealed. For they place their happiness no where but in the praise of men. It is hence that the foolish virgins are said to have taken no oil in their vessels; because such as be arrogant, if perchance they keep themselves from any vices, cannot confine to their own consciences the credit of the glory. But Paul had taken oil in his own vessel, who said, *Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience.* To carry then an empty vessel, is with a heart empty within to seek for the judgment of men's lips from without. Because Eliu, then, when seeking for glory from without, has not oil within his vessel, he well says, *I will answer my part, and I will display my learning.* And in the words which follow he shews what are his sufferings, from vain-glory raging within, saying,

Book XXIII.

Mat. 25, 3.

2 Cor. 1, 12.

Ver. 18—20. *I am full of words, the spirit of my womb constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as new wine without a vent, which bursts in sunder new vessels. I will speak, and will take breath awhile; I will open my lips and answer.*

18. When boastful men observe that holy preachers speak eloquently, and are reverenced for their eloquence, they frequently imitate the loftiness of their language, and not their useful intention. They are far from loving what the others desire, but are especially anxious to gain great renown amongst men. For it is frequently the case that wise men, when they find that they are not listened to, impose silence on their lips. But frequently when they see that the sins of the ungodly gain strength when they are silent, and cease to reprove, they endure a kind of violence in their spirit, so that they burst forth in language of open reproof. And hence when the Prophet Jeremiah had imposed on himself silence in preaching, saying, *I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His Name;* he immediately added, *And there was made as it were a burning fire in my bosom, and shut up in my bones: and I was wearied, not being able to bear it; for I have heard the insults of many.* For, seeing that he was not listened to, he wished to hold his peace; but when he beheld evil increasing, he no longer

xi.

Jer. 20, 9.

Job 32, 18—20. persisted in the same silence. For when he ceased to speak without, from being wearied of speaking[c], he felt a flame kindled within him by the zeal of charity. For the hearts of the just burn within them, when they behold the deeds of the ungodly gain strength from not being reproved, and they believe that they are themselves partakers in the guilt of those, whom they allow, by their own silence, to go on in iniquity. The prophet David, after he had imposed silence Ps.39,1. on himself, saying, *I have set a guard upon my mouth, while the sinner stood against me. I was dumb, and was humbled, and kept silence even from good things:* in the midst of his silence blazed forth with this zeal of charity, when he Ps.39,3. immediately subjoined; *My sorrow was renewed, my heart grew hot within me, and in my meditation a fire shall flame out.* His heart grew hot within him, because the flame of charity refused to burst forth in words of admonition. The fire burned in the meditation of his heart, because his reproof of the ungodly had ceased to flow on with the chiding of his lips. For the zeal of charity tempers itself with wonderful consolation, as it gains strength, when it bursts forth in words of reproof against the deeds of the ungodly, in order that it may not cease to reprove the faults which it cannot amend, lest it should convict itself of partaking in their sins, by consent of keeping silence.

19. But because certain vices frequently assume the guise of virtues, as, for instance, lavishness wishes to appear like pity, stinginess like frugality, cruelty like justice; in like manner, a desire for empty glory, being unable to keep itself within the bounds of silence, inflames like the zeal of charity, and the powerful desire of ostentation impels a person to speak without restraint, and the desire of display breaks out, as if with the wish of offering advice. For it cares not what good it can effect by its speaking, but what show it can make: nor is it anxious to correct the evil which it beholds, but to display the good which it feels. Hence Eliu also, swollen by the spirit of pride, and unable to keep himself ver. 18. 19. within the barriers of silence, says, *I am full of words, the spirit of my womb constraineth me; behold, my belly is as new wine without a vent which bursts in sunder new vessels.*

[c] Comma after 'locutionis,' as the rhythm and the sense both require.

20. If we must understand this passage spiritually, by 'belly' he means the secret recesses of the heart. But by new wine is understood the warmth of the Holy Spirit, of which the Lord says in the Gospel, *They put new wine into new skins.* For when the Apostles were filled suddenly therewith, and were speaking in every tongue, it was said by the Jews, who knew not the truth and yet bare witness to it, *These men are full of new wine.* But by vessels we understand not inappropriately either consciences which are weak from their very estate of humanity, or certainly those earthly vessels of our bodies; of which the Apostle Paul says, *We have this treasure in earthen vessels.* But because Eliu, as we before observed, was so puffed up and swollen with pride, as though he were kindled within, to speak through the grace of charity, by the fire of the Holy Spirit, compares the spirit, which he felt within him when silent, to new wine without a vent. And he well says, *Which bursts asunder new vessels*, because the fire of the Holy Spirit is scarcely kept in by the new life, much less by the old. The new wine then bursts asunder new vessels, because by its violent heat it is too much even for spiritual hearts. *I will speak, and I will take breath a little; I will open my lips and answer.* He well says, *I will take breath*, for as it is a distress to the holy to behold wickedness, without amending it; so is it a heavy distress to the boastful, if they do not display the wisdom they possess. For they can scarcely endure the violence which boils within them, if they are rather behindhand in making known every thing which they think. And hence, when any good deed is taken in hand, all pride on account of it must first be overcome in the heart, lest, if it should proceed from the root of a bad motive, it should bring forth the bitter fruits of sin.

Matt. 9, 17.

Acts 2, 4.

2 Cor. 4, 7.

ver. 20.

21. These then, who are as yet engaged in a contest with their sins, ought never to undertake to rule over others by exercising the office of preaching. And this is the reason, why, according to the command of the Divine dispensation, the Levites serve the tabernacle from their twenty-fifth year, but from their fiftieth become the guardians of the sacred vessels. For what is meant by the five and twentieth year, when youth is in its full vigour, but the

Numb. 8, 24.

Job 32, 21. 22. contests against each separate sin? And what is expressed by the fiftieth, in which is signified also the rest of the Jubilee, but the repose of the mind within, when the contest has come to an end? But what is shadowed forth by the vessels of the tabernacle, except the souls of the faithful? The Levites, therefore, serve the tabernacle from their five and twentieth year, and take charge of the vessels from their fiftieth, to shew that they who endure, through pleasurable consent, the contest with sins which still assault them, should not presume to take the charge of others: but that when they have been successful in their contests with temptations, by which they are assured of inward tranquillity, they may then undertake the care of souls. But who can perfectly subdue these assaults of temptations, when Paul

Rom. 7, 23. says, *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin?* But it is one thing boldly to endure contests, another to be unnerved by them and overcome. In the first case virtue is kept in exercise, to secure it from being puffed up; in the other, it is quite quenched that it cease to be. He then who knows how to endure with boldness the temptation of the contest, even when he feels its shock, sits on high in the lofty citadel of peace. For he sees that the assaults of sin are, even when within him, subject to his power, since he does not yield his consent to them, from being overcome by any pleasure. It follows:

Ver. 21, 22. *I will not accept the person of man, I will not equal God to man; for I know not how long I shall continue, or whether after a while my Maker may take me away.*

xii. 22. Most judiciously he does not make God equal to man, since he knows not how long he may continue, or when in the judgment of God be taken away. And he well says, *After a while my Maker may take me away;* for however long is the period of the present life, it is short, from the very fact, that it is not enduring. For that which is confined within circumscribed limits has no claim to be considered lasting. But in the midst of these sentences which he utters, based on solid truth, he again bursts out into words of pride, saying,

Chap. xxxiii. ver. 1, 2. *Wherefore, Job, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words. Behold, I have opened my mouth; let my tongue speak in my throat.* Book XXIII.

23. Let us consider from what a height of pride he comes down in admonishing Job to listen to him, in saying that he had opened his mouth, in promising that his tongue would speak in his throat. For the teaching of the boastful has this peculiarity, that they cannot modestly suggest what they teach, and cannot communicate in a right manner the truths they hold rightly. For they make it plain by their words that they fancy themselves, when teaching, to be seated on some lofty eminence, and that they look upon their hearers as standing far beneath them, as on lower ground, as persons whom they hardly deign to address, not in the tone of advice, but of authority. Well does the Lord address them by the Prophet, *But ye ruled them with austerity and power.* For they rule with austerity and power, who are eager to correct those under them, not by calmly reasoning, but to bend them by the severity of command. xiii. Ez. 34, 4.

24. But sound teaching, on the other hand, the more earnestly avoids this sin of pride in thought, the more eagerly it assails with the shafts of its words the teacher of pride himself. For it takes heed lest it be rather preaching him by a haughty demeanour, whom it assails with holy words in the hearts of its hearers. For it endeavours to state in its words, and to set forth in its doings, humility, which is the mistress and mother of all virtues, in order that it may enforce it on the disciples of truth more by its conduct than by its words. Whence Paul in speaking to the Thessalonians, as if he had forgotten the height of his own Apostleship, *We became as children in the midst of you.* Whence the Apostle Peter, when saying, *Ever ready to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you,* asserted that in the science of teaching the manner of one's teaching is to be strictly attended to, by subjoining, *But with modesty and fear, having a good conscience.* But in that which the Apostle Paul says to his disciple, *These things exhort and teach with all authority;* he does not recommend the tyranny of power, but the authority of his life. For that is enjoined with authority which is practised before it is 1 Thess. 2, 7. 1 Pet. 3, 15. ib. 16. 1 Tim. 4, 11. Tit. 2, 15.

Job 33, 1. 2. advised. For when conscience makes the tongue falter, it detracts from the authority of one's talking. He did not recommend him therefore the authority of haughty words, but the confidence of good conduct. Whence it is said of Matt. 8, 29. the Lord, *He was teaching as having authority, not as the Scribes and Pharisees.* For He alone in a singular and peculiar manner spoke with sound authority, because He had committed no sins from infirmity. For He possessed that from the power of His Godhead, which He has bestowed in us through the sinlessness of His Manhood.

25. For we, because we are feeble men, when we come to speak of God to our fellows, should first of all call to mind our own nature, and thus consider from our own infirmities in what order we should offer advice to our weakly brethren. Let us consider then that we are either now such as some of those whom we are correcting, or were heretofore such, though by the operation of Divine Grace we are so no longer: that in humility of heart we may correct them with greater forbearance, the more truly we recognise ourselves in the persons of those whom we correct. But if we are neither now such, nor have been such as those still are whom we are anxious to improve; for fear our heart should perchance be proud, and should fall the more fatally by reason of its very innocence, let us recal to our eyes the other good qualities of those whose faults we are correcting. If they have not any such, let us fall back on the secret judgments of God. Because as we have received this very good, which we possess, for no deserts of our own; so is He able to pour on them the grace of power from above, so that though roused to exertion after ourselves, they may be able to outstrip even those good qualities which we received so long before. For who could believe that Saul, who kept at his death the raiment of those that were stoning him, would surpass Stephen who had been stoned, by the honour[1] of the Apostleship. Our heart ought then to be first humbled by these thoughts, and then the sin of offenders should be reproved. But as has been often said, Eliu is shewn to be unacquainted with this mode of speaking, who is puffed up in his words, by the haughtiness of pride, as if by the power of a kind of authority, saying, *Wherefore Job hear my speeches, and hearken* Job 33, 1.

[1] meritum (or service)

to all my words. Behold I have opened my mouth, let my tongue speak in my throat. Book XXIII.

26. To speak in the throat is to speak softly, and not to vociferate loudly. In which words he designates haughty men living within holy Church. For these are said to speak as if in the throat, when they do not clamour against the adversaries who are without, but reprove some within the bosom of holy Church, as if they were neighbours and placed near them. But haughty men often make a show of avoiding that very pride, which they entertain; and while they do all things so as not to escape the notice of any one, they privately mention them to particular persons, in order that they may boast not merely of their sense of wisdom, but also of their contempt of arrogance before men. Whence it is now said, *Let my tongue speak in my throat.* As if it were plainly said, Behold, I whisper that which I think wisely against thee. But they sometimes break out into such a height of impudence, as, when others are silent, to be accustomed to praise their own sayings. Whence he subjoins,

Ver. 3. *My words are from my simple heart, and my lips shall speak a pure sentence.*

27. To say that speech is simple, is a praise of great weight. But because the haughty possess it not, they assert the more anxiously that they possess it, in order that they may be heard with less apprehension. And they declare that they are going to speak with pure intention, because they are afraid of their wicked duplicity being discovered. But they often also blend together truth and falsehood, that their falsehood may be the more speedily believed, from its being discerned that they speak the truth. Because then Eliu both said that he would speak with pure intention, and by calling his words 'sentences' ushered them in with applause, he subjoins the same 'sentence' which he promised, saying, xiv.

Ver. 4. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

28. Intending to subjoin truth, he first uttered boastful words, and being about to state the sound opinions he held, he first made known how huge was his swelling. The minds xv.

Job 33, 3. of the arrogant are doubtless so very mad, that even in what they think rightly, they are disfigured by the deformity of their pride. And hence even their sound opinions do not instruct their hearers, because in truth they lead them by their haughty sentiments not to reverence but to despise them. And when words of folly are blended with wise sayings, even their wisdom is not kept in mind, because their folly is despised by him who hears it. For hence it is said Lev. 15, 16. by Moses, *A man who suffers a running of seed shall be unclean.* For what are our words but seed? And when this is poured forth in due measure, the mind of the hearer, as the womb of her who conceives, is made fruitful for an offspring of good works. But if it escapes at improper times, polluting him that emits it, it loses its generating power. For if words were not seed, the Athenians would never have said of Acts 17, 18. Paul, as he was preaching to them, *What would this word-*Acts 14, 12. *sower*[1] *say?* of whom Luke says, *He was the chief speaker.* [1] *seminiverbius.* Seed, then, which is intended for the purpose of procreation, when it escapes in an improper manner, pollutes the other members: and speech also, by which learning ought to be implanted in the hearts of the hearers, if uttered out of due order, brings disgrace even on the truths it utters. And hence Eliu also pollutes even the truths he is able to entertain, when he is ignorant of what he is saying, or to whom he is saying it, and suffers, as it were, discharge of seed, when he employs his tongue, which is fitted to answer useful purpose, in words of empty sound. But he speaks in proper order of his being made, and receiving life. For he says, that he was made by the Spirit, and that he received life by the breath of God. For it is written of Adam when created, Gen. 2, 7. *He breathed into his face the breath of life, and man was made into a living soul.* But let us listen whether he proceeds properly with what he has well laid down. It follows,

Ver. 5. *If thou canst, answer me, and stand before my face.*

xvi. 29. Behold how in relating the true order of his creation, he suddenly bursts forth into the pride of haughty arrogance, and, in other words, repeats the same statement, by saying,

Ver. 6, 7. *Behold, God made me as well as thee, and I am*

also formed of the same clay; yet let not my wonder terrify thee, and my eloquence be burdensome to thee. What then is meant by Eliu acknowledging the order of his true creation, and not knowing the limits of proper speech? What by his putting himself on a level with Job when created, and setting himself above him when about to speak? What but this, that though haughty men remember that they are equal in nature to other men, yet that through the pride of knowledge they do not deign even to believe that they have even their equals[a]: and that though they compare themselves with them, in the condition of their nature, they place themselves above them from pride in their wisdom. They decide that though they were made equal by birth, yet they have not continued so, in their way of life. And from their not being equal to them as it were in their way of life, they count it a greater marvel that they were equal to them when they were born. And hence Eliu says, when inflated with pride, *Behold, God made me as well as thee, and I also was formed from the same clay; yet let not my wonder terrify thee, nor my eloquence be burdensome to thee.* For it is peculiar to the arrogant, that they always believe, even before they speak, that they are going to say some wonderful thing, and that they anticipate their own words by their own admiration, because, with all their acuteness, they are not sensible how great a folly is their very pride. We must observe also that Paul, when he was giving the Hebrews some striking warnings, subjoined, *I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of consolation, for I have written to you in few words.* But Eliu uttered empty words, and afterwards added, as if for consolation, *Let not my wonder terrify thee, nor my eloquence be burdensome to thee.* The one called his sayings the word of consolation, the other called them eloquence, and a marvel. Behold, how different in taste are the fruits which spring forth from diverse roots of thought. The one thinks humbly of his high qualities, the other exalts himself without reason on his scanty endowments. What then is specially to be observed in all this, but that those who are about to rise, think themselves low, and that they who are soon to fall,

Book XXIII.

Heb.13, 22.

[a] The text seems scarcely grammatical, but the sense cannot be far from what is given.

Job 33, 8—12. Prov. 16, 18. ever stand on high ground? As Solomon bears witness, *The heart is exalted before destruction, and is brought low before honour.* It follows,

Ver. 8. *Thou hast spoken then in mine ears, and I have heard the voice of thy words.* And subjoining the very words, he says,

Ver. 9—11. *I am clean, and without spot of sin, and there is no iniquity in me, because He hath found complaints in me, therefore He hath counted me as His enemy, He hath placed my feet in the stocks, He hath guarded all my ways.* And in answer to these words which he said blessed Job had spoken, he immediately states his own opinion, saying,

Ver. 12. *This is the thing then in which thou art not justified.*

xvi. Job 27, 6. Job 2, 3. 30. Blessed Job had indeed truly said, that he had been scourged without any fault. For he said of himself exactly what the Lord had said of him to the devil, *Thou hast moved Me against him to afflict him without cause.* But Eliu did not believe, that his fault doing nothing in it, he could be scourged as a matter of grace. For he did not know that by his scourgings his fault was not corrected, but his merits increased, and because he had said that he had been scourged without any fault, he reproves him in these words, saying, *This is the thing then in which thou art not justified.* For it is the special fault of the arrogant, to be more eager to convict, than to console; and to consider that whatever sufferings they see befal men, have befallen them solely from their sins. They know not how to enquire deeply into the secret judgments of God[1], and humbly to investigate that which they cannot understand: for while pride at their knowledge raises them on high, it frequently casts them down from the secret investigation of God's judgments.

[1] some Mss. add 'Dei.'

31. For suffering of mind is an impediment in the way of truth: because while it puffs us up, it obscures our view. For if these persons ever seem to acquire wisdom, they feed, as it were, on the husks of things, and not on the marrow of their inmost sweetness; and with their brilliant abilities, they frequently reach only to the outside of things, but know not the savour of their inward taste; for, in truth, though

sharp-sighted outwardly, they are blind within. Nor do they form such a notion of God, as tastes secretly within, but such as when thrown outward gives a sound. And though they gain in their understanding a knowledge of some mysteries, they can have no experience of their sweetness: and if they know how they exist, yet they know not, as I said, how they savour. And so it is frequently the case, that though they speak boldly, yet they know not how to live up to what they profess. Whence a certain wise man well said, *May God grant me to speak these things according to my sentence.* For sentence is derived from sense. And a man who wishes not merely to speak from outward knowledge, but to feel and experience what he says, is anxious to give utterance to the truths he holds, not as a matter of mere knowledge[1], but of real feeling[2]. But the mind of haughty men does not penetrate the meaning of its own words; because by a righteous judgment it is driven away from the inward taste of things, and is wrecked by that applause which it desires from without. But real knowledge influences without elating; and makes those whom it has filled, not proud, but sorrowful. For when any one is filled therewith, he is in the first place anxious to know himself: and conscious of his own state, he acquires thereby a greater savour of strength, the more truly sensible he is of his own weakness therein. And this very humility opens to him more widely the pathway of this knowledge, and when he beholds his own weakness, this very knowledge opens to him the hidden recesses of sublime secrets; and pressed down by this knowledge, he is made more subtle to press forward into things hidden. Eliu then does not in the scourgings of blessed Job discover their true reason, because he knows not how to search for it with humility: and being more ready to reproach than to console, he says, *It is in this thing, then, that thou art not justified.*

Book XXIII.

Wisd. 7, 15.

[1] sententia. [2] sensu.

[1] scientia [2] sententia

32. We must observe further, that blessed Job said that his foot was placed in the stocks, but that he never said that he was clean, in the way in which is objected to him, or free from sin, or without spot, and iniquity. But Eliu, in his desire to reprove austerely what has been said, falsely added what had not been said. For they who are ever eager to reprove and not to encourage, frequently state many false-

Job 13, 2.

Job 33, 12. hoods in their reproofs. For in order to appear clever in reproving, they frequently invent statements, for the sake of reproving them, and, being eager, as horses, to run their course of ostentation, they clear the way for assailing those who are subject to them by inventing charges of iniquity. It must be understood besides, as I said above, that haughty men often blend forcible words with their words of boasting, and that sometimes they do not consider how they live, but studiously weigh what they teach. Of such Eliu is a specimen in the present case, who is not so anxious to live well, as to teach well. Since then he speaks, though arrogantly, yet with knowledge, let us pass over the pride of his conduct, and consider the solidity of his teaching. After all these boastful words, then, he begins at length to display his knowledge, and says,

Ver. 12. *I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.*

xviii. 33. Some one may perhaps observe, Who knows not that, even without being told it? But no wonder if this remark is believed to be of little value, if it is not considered in the very root of its meaning. He was speaking to one who had been scourged, who had both felt the blows of smiting, and was ignorant of the reason of them. And therefore he remarked, *I will answer thee, that God is greater than man;* that man, when scourged, yet considering that God is greater than himself, may submit himself to the judgment of Him, to Whom he has no doubt he is inferior, and may believe that that which he suffers from his superior is just, even though he does not know the grounds of its justice. For whoever is smitten for his sins, unless he murmurs and struggles against it, begins at once to be a righteous man, from not impugning the justice of Him who smites him. For man is created inferior to God, and returns to the order of his creation, when he submits himself to the equity of his Judge, even when he cannot comprehend it. It is therefore well said, *I will answer thee, that God is greater than man,* in order that on considering the power of the Creator, the swelling of the mind may cease to rage, through the thought of the condition in which it was created. Whence David the Prophet, when compelled by the weight of the blows to burst forth into extravagant words, says on bringing himself back to the

consideration of his own origin, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, since Thou hast made me.* For he considered in what rank he was created, and learned the justice of the blow; for He Who kindly created him who as yet was not, surely smote him only with justice when he was now in being. It follows. Book XXIII. Ps. 39, 9.

Ver. 13, 14. *Thou contendest against Him, because He hath not replied to thee to all thy words. God will speak once, and will not repeat the same thing a second time.*

34. It is natural to the afflicted heart, when it beholds any thing going contrary to its wishes, to wish to gain an answer, if possible, by the voice of God, why things are in this way, and not in that: to consult God in this whole matter under debate, and to acquiesce on learning the meaning of His reply. But Eliu, foreseeing that the Lord was composing holy Scripture, for the purposes of replying therein to the open or secret enquiries of all men, says, *Thou contendest against Him, because He hath not replied to all thy words. God will speak once, and will not repeat the same thing a second time.* As if he were to say, God does not reply in private speaking to the hearts of men one by one; but fashions His word in such a manner, as to satisfy the enquiries of all men. For if we look for our own cases one by one, we are sure to find them in the teaching of His Scriptures; nor is there need to seek for a special answer from the voice of God, in our own special sufferings. For there a general reply is given to all of us in our own special sufferings: there the conduct of those who go before is a model for such as come after. To take one instance out of many. We are labouring under some suffering or annoyance of the flesh. We wish perhaps to know the secret reasons of this suffering or annoyance, in order that we may be comforted in our trial from the very knowledge. But because no special reply is given to us one by one, concerning our own special trials, we betake ourselves to holy Scripture. And there is it that we find what Paul heard when tried by the infirmity of the flesh. *My grace is sufficient for thee; for strength is made perfect in weakness.* And this was spoken to him in his own peculiar suffering, that it might not be spoken to us one by one. We have heard therefore in holy Scripture xix. 2 Cor. 12, 9.

Job 33, 13. 14. the voice of God to Paul in his affliction, in order that we may not seek to hear it one by one, for our own private consolation, if perchance we are afflicted. God does not then reply to all our words, because *He will speak once, and will not repeat the same thing again;* that is, He has provided for our instruction, by what He stated to our fathers in holy Scripture. Let the teachers then of Holy Church, let even these men of arrogance, announce, (on beholding some within her sinking from faintheartedness,) that God does not reply to all our words, that *God will speak once, and will not repeat the same thing twice.* In other words, He does not now satisfy the doubts and perplexities of individual men by the voice of the Prophets on every side, or by the ministry of Angels. Because He includes in holy Scripture whatever can possibly befal each one of us, and has provided therein for regulating the conduct of those who come after, by the examples of those who have gone before.

35. But yet this remark, *God will speak once, and will not repeat the same thing twice,* may be understood in a deeper meaning; that the Father begat His Consubstantial, Only-begotten Son. For God's speaking is His having begotten the Word. But for God to speak once, is for Him to have no other Word beside the Only-begotten. And hence it is fitly subjoined, *And He will not repeat the same thing twice,* because this very Word, that is, the Son, He begat not otherwise than only-begotten. But in that He says not, "He spake," but "will speak," using, namely, not the past tense but the future, it is plain to all, that neither past nor future time is appropriate to God. Any tense is therefore the more freely used in speaking of Him, since no one is used with strict truth. But any tense whatever could not be freely used, if one at least could be used properly. It is allowable then for any tense to be boldly used in speaking of God, since no one is strictly proper. For the Father begat the Son without regard to time.

26. And who can worthily speak of that ineffable nativity, that the Coeternal is begotten from the Eternal, that He who existed before all ages begat His Equal, that the Son was not posterior to Him Who begat Him? We can marvel at these things, but it is beyond our power to look into them.

But to be able to wonder at that mighty nativity is in a certain degree to see it. But how do we see that which we do by no means comprehend? But we must borrow an instance from the habits of the body to illustrate the feelings of the mind. If any one is lying down in a dark place, with his eyes closed, and the light of a candle suddenly flashes before him, his eyes, though closed, are so struck by the very approach of the light, that they open. Why are they thus affected, if they saw nothing when closed? And yet it was not any thing perfect which they could see when closed. For if they had seen the whole object perfectly, why should they when opened seek for something to look at? And thus, thus are we, when we endeavour to behold ought of the incomprehensible nativity. For even in this, that the mind is struck with surprise at the shining, and sees in a manner what it is not able really to see, it beholds as if in darkness the power of the light with closed eyes[a]. But because the secret admiration of the Divine Nature is not easily made known to minds which are occupied with worldly desires, he very fitly suggests the way in which God speaks to us, by saying,

Ver. 15. *In a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men, and they sleep on their bed.*

37. What is meant by the word of God being made known to us in a dream, except that we do not learn the secret things of God, if we are kept awake by worldly desires? For in a dream the outward senses are at rest, and inward objects are discerned. If we wish then to contemplate things within, let us rest from outward engagements. The voice of God, in truth, is heard as if in dreams, when, with minds at ease, we rest from the bustle of this world, and the Divine precepts xx.

[a] Here the older Edd. have a passage which Ben. omits, as it is not in the MSS. 'For Eliu says, *God speaketh once;* but David, looking to the nativity of the only-begotten Word, says, *God spake once.*' For since the only-begotten Son and Word of the Father is both called 'Born' in respect of perfection, and in respect of eternity is even said to be in birth; Holy Scripture useth to say freely of God that He 'hath spoken,' and 'speaketh.' For in that He begat the Word perfect, God 'hath spoken,' and in that He ever begetteth, He surely 'speaketh;' though this which we called 'perfect' we do not say with strictness. For that which is not effected (factum) cannot be strictly said to be 'perfected,' (perfectum.) But we express His fulness with a somewhat straitened form of speech; as also of the Father the Lord saith, *Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect,* (Matt. v. 48.) It looks like a note on the former paragraph, which may have been written at the foot of the page.

Job 33, 15. are pondered by us in the deep silence of the mind. For when the mind is at rest from outward employments, the weight of the Divine precepts is more fully discerned. It is then that the mind penetrates, in a more lively manner, the words of God, when it refuses to admit within the tumult of worldly cares. But a man is awake to little good purpose, when the turmoil of worldly business gives him unusual disturbance. For the crowd of earthly thoughts, when it clamours around, closes the ear of the mind. And the voice of the presiding judge is less plainly heard in the secret tribunal of the mind, the less the sound of tumultuous cares is kept still. For a man when distracted is not fully equal to attend to both together. But while he seeks for inward instruction, but so as yet to be engaged in outward employments; by opening his ear to things without, he becomes deaf within. Moses, when living amongst the Egyptians, was, as it were, awake, and so when dwelling in Egypt he did not hear the voice of God. But after that he had fled into the desert, after the slaughter of the Egyptian, and dwelt there forty years, he fell asleep as it were from the disquieting tumults of worldly desires; and therefore it was vouchsafed him[1] to hear the voice of God, because the more indifferent he became through Divine grace to outward objects of desire, the more was he really awake to discern truths within. And again, when appointed to rule over the people of Israel, he is taken up into the Mount, to learn the precepts of the Law, and is preserved from tumults without, that he might penetrate into mysteries within.

Ex. 2, 11. 12.

[1] meruit

Ex. 19, 3.

38. And hence is it that holy men, who are obliged by the necessity of their employments to engage in outward pursuits, are ever studiously betaking themselves to the secrets of their hearts; and there do they ascend the height of secret thought, and learn (as it were) the Law in the Mount: when they put aside the tumults of worldly business, and ponder, on the height of their thought, the sentence of the Divine will. And hence is it that the same Moses frequently retires to the Tabernacle on doubtful points; and there secretly consults God, and learns what certain decision to come to. For to leave the crowd, and retire to the Tabernacle, is to put aside the tumults of outward objects, and to enter into the

secret recess of the mind. For the Lord is there consulted, and we hear inwardly and in silence, what we must do openly and without. This course wise rulers daily pursue; when they are aware that they cannot settle doubtful points, they betake themselves to the secret recesses of their mind, as if to a kind of tabernacle. By looking into the Divine Law, they consult the Lord, as it were before the Ark. And what they first hear in silence, they afterwards make known to the world in their conduct. For in order that they may engage in outward employments without injury to themselves, they constantly take care to withdraw to the secrets of their heart. And they thus hear the voice of God, as it were, in a dream, while they withdraw themselves in the thoughts of their mind from the influence of carnal things. Hence is it that, in the Song of Songs, the Bride who said, *I sleep, and my heart is awake*, had heard the voice of the Bridegroom in dreams. As if she were saying, While I give my outward senses rest from the anxieties of this world, I have a more lively perception of inward truths, when my mind is unemployed. I am asleep to outward things, but my heart is awake within, because, when I am insensible as it were to outward objects, I have a keen apprehension of inward secrets.

Book XXIII.

Solom. Song 5, 2.

39. Well then says Eliu, that God speaketh by a dream; and fitly did he add, *In a vision of the night.* For a vision of the night usually presents itself to the contemplation of the mind under certain images. But we perceive objects more plainly by daylight, we see less quickly in a vision of the night. And because all holy men, as long as they are in this life, behold the secrets of the Divine Nature only under certain resemblances, (since they do not, as yet, gain a clearer sight of them as they really are;) after Eliu had said that God speaks to us in a dream, he rightly adds, *in a vision of the night.* For 'night' is this present life, and as long as we are in it, we are covered with a mist of uncertain imaginations as far as the sight of inward objects is concerned. For the Prophet was sensible that he was held by a certain mist in his sight of the Lord, when he says, *My soul longed for Thee in the night.* As if he were to say, I long to behold Thee in the obscurity of this present life, but I am still

Is. 26, 9.

Jos 33, 16. surrounded by the mist of infirmity. David also wishing to avoid the gloom of this life, and waiting for the brightness of Ps. 5,3. the true light, says, *In the morning I will stand before Thee, and will see.* He who longs for the approach of morning, in order to behold God, perceives that he can still see but imperfectly, in the night. But because, as we said, sleeping is ceasing from outward action, Eliu rightly adds, *When sleep falls upon men.* And because holy men, when unemployed in outward action, rest within the chambers of their mind, he fitly subjoins, *and they sleep on their bed.* For holy men to sleep in their bed, is for them to take rest in the chamber Ps. 149, 5. of their mind. Whence it is written, *The saints shall exult in glory, they shall rejoice in their beds.* Let it be said then that *God speaks once to us through a dream in a vision of the night, when sleep falls upon men, and they sleep in their bed.* Because we then doubtless discern the secrets of the Godhead, when we withdraw ourselves into the chambers of our minds from the tumultuous desires of this world. But because, as we have already frequently said before, the turmoil of worldly business closes the ear, and the rest of secret contemplation opens it, he properly subjoins,

Ver. 16. *Then He openeth the ears of men, and teaching, instructeth them with discipline.*

xxi. 40. For when they are dead to outward objects, they hear with open ears the causes which come before their inward judgment. And when they consider minutely with themselves either their open punishments, or their secret judgments, they cease not to afflict themselves with tears. Whence it is well said, *And teaching, He instructeth them with discipline*, because to a mind which reflects and wounds itself with penitence, the sorrows of compunction are like the stripes of a blow. Whence Solomon also rightly uniting together the force of these kinds of Prov. 20, 30. blows, says, *The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil, and blows in the secret parts of the belly.* For by the blueness of a wound he implies the discipline of blows on the body. But blows in the secret parts of the belly are the wounds of the mind within, which are inflicted by compunction. For as the belly is distended when filled with food, so is the mind puffed up when swollen with wicked

thoughts. The blueness then of a wound, and blows in the secret parts of the belly, cleanse away evil, because both outward discipline does away with faults, and compunction pierces the distended mind with the punishment of penance. But they differ from each other in this respect, that the wounds of blows give us pain, the sorrows of compunction have good savour. The one afflict and torture, the others restore, when they afflict us. Through the one there is sorrow in affliction, through the other there is joy in grief. But because the very act of compunction wounds the mind, he not unfitly calls it discipline.

41. For there are four modes in which the mind of a righteous man is strongly affected by compunction: when he either calls to mind his own sins, and considers WHERE HE HATH BEEN; or when fearing the sentence of God's judgments, and examining his own self, he thinks WHERE HE SHALL BE: or when, carefully observing the evils of this present life, he reflects with sorrow WHERE HE IS; or when he contemplates the blessings of his heavenly country, and, because he does not as yet enjoy them, beholds with regret WHERE HE IS NOT. Paul had called to mind his former sins, and was afflicting himself by the sight of what he had been, when he said, *I am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.* Again, from carefully weighing the Divine sentence, he was afraid that it was bad for him in prospect, when he says, *I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perchance, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway.* And again, he was considering the evils of this present life, when he said, *While we are in this body, we are absent from the Lord:* and, *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me captive to the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* And again, he was considering the blessings of his heavenly country, when saying, *We see now through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known.* And again, *We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in*

1 Cor. 15, 9.

1 Cor. 9, 27.

2 Cor. 5, 6. Rom. 7, 23.

1 Cor. 13, 12.

2 Cor. 5, 1.

Job 32, 16. *the heavens.* And looking at the blessings of this house, he says to the Ephesians, *That ye may know what is the hope* Eph. 1, 18. 19. *of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who have believed.* But blessed Job 7, 1. Job, considering the evils of this present life, says, *The life of man upon the earth is a temptation.* Whence David says, Ps. 39, 6. *Every man that liveth is altogether vanity; and though man walketh in the image of God, yet will he be disquieted in vain.* But again, on contemplating his heavenly home, and weighing the evils in which he then was, and considering the Ps. 120, 5. good things which he did not as yet enjoy, he says, *Woe is* Ps. 31, 22. *me that my sojourning is prolonged;* and, *I said in my fear, I am cast out from the sight of Thine eyes.* Being raised up in an ecstasy, which our translators properly interpreted *fear*, he saw that he was cast out from the sight of the eyes of God. For after beholding that inward light, which flashed within his mind with bright rays through the grace of contemplation, he returned to himself; and discerned, by the knowledge he had gained, either the blessings which were there, of which he was deprived, or the evils with which he was here surrounded. For no one is able to look on the ills of life as they really are, if he is unable by contemplation to gain a taste of the blessings of the eternal country. Whence also he knew that he had been cast out of the sight of the eyes of God. For when he was raised up in a trance, he saw that which, when he fell back on himself, he lamented that he could not of himself behold.

42. For that compunction with which it dispels all bodily imaginations which crowd upon it, and annoy it, and with which it strives to fix the eye of the heart on the very ray of the boundless light, is wont in truth more deeply to affect a perfect mind. For these appearances of bodily figures it has attracted to itself within, through infirmity of the flesh. But when it is completely filled with compunction, it is here specially on its guard, lest the imagination of circumscribed vision should delude it, when it is searching after truth; and it rejects all imaginations which present themselves to it. For since it has fallen, by their means, beneath itself, it endeavours to rise above itself, by escaping from them: and

after it has been distracted, in an unseemly manner, by many objects, it endeavours to gather itself again together; that prevailing by the mighty power of love, it may contemplate one single and incorporeal Being. BOOK XXIII.

43. And hence it is admitted, at times, to taste some unusual savour of sweetness within, and is suddenly in a measure refreshed, when breathed on by the glowing Spirit; and is the more eager, the more it gains a taste of something to love; and it desires that within itself, which it feels to taste sweetly within, because it has in truth, from the love of its sweetness, become vile in its own sight; and after having been able, in whatever way, to enjoy it, it has discovered what it had hitherto been without it. It endeavours to cling closely to it, but is kept from approaching its strength, by its own remaining weakness; and because it is unable to contemplate its purity, it counts it sweet to weep, and, sinking back into itself, to make its bed in the tears of its own weakness. For it cannot fix the eyes of its mind on that, of which it has only taken a hasty glance within; because it is compelled by its own old habits to sink downwards. It meanwhile pants and strives and endeavours to rise above itself, but sinks back, overpowered with weariness, into its own familiar darkness. But because a mind thus affected, has to endure itself as the cause of a stubborn contest against itself, and because all this controversy about ourselves causes no small amount of pain, when we are engaged in it, whatever pleasure may be blended therewith; Eliu, after having said that God speaks to us in a dream, and that our ears are opened by His words, calls this same opening of the ears a discipline, and with good reason. Because the more the sound of inward wisdom by the grace of its secret inspiration bursts forth upon us, the more does it affect us with distress. For no one would outwardly lament that which he is, if he had not been able to perceive within, that which as yet he is not. For on seeing that we ourselves were created aright, but that we were deceived by giving a fatal consent to the persuasions of the devil, we observe in our own case, that what we made ourselves is one thing, and what we were made is another: that by nature we were sound, but that we became corrupted through our own

Job 33, 17—19. fault. And therefore when we are pinched by conscience, we seek to escape from what we ourselves have done, that we may be refashioned after the pattern in which we were first made. Whence it fitly follows,

Ver. 17. *That He may withdraw man from the things that he has done, and may deliver him from pride.*

xxii. 44. For what has man done of himself but sin? And it is Ecclus. 10, 13. written, *Pride is the beginning of all sin.* It is rightly said, then, that when man is withdrawn from what he has done, he is freed from pride. To transgress the commands of our Creator by sin, is to be haughty against Him; because a man casts off, as it were, the yoke of His authority, to Whom he scorns to submit by obedience. On the other hand, he who wishes to avoid what he has done, calls to mind what he was made by God: and humbly returns to the order of his creation, when flying from his own deeds, he loves himself as he was at first created by God. But because eternal glory is obtained, and eternal punishments are avoided, by this wisdom, it is appropriately subjoined,

Ver. 18. *Rescuing his soul from corruption, and his life from passing to the sword.*

xxiii. 45. For every sinner, in consequence of his corruption by sin here, is compelled to pass thither to the sword of punishment; that he may be justly punished in that world, by the very sins in which he delighted in this.

We must observe therefore, that God, speaking to us in a dream, delivers us first from corruption, and afterwards from the sword: because in truth He delivers the 'life' of that person from avenging punishment there, whose mind He here withdraws from the allurement of sin. Nor has he any thing to fear there from the sword of judgment, whom the pollution of guilt has not here corrupted after his amendment. It is well said then, *Rescuing his soul from corruption, and his life from passing to the sword.* For to pass from corruption to the sword, is, after the commission of sin, to arrive at the punishments which have to be endured. It follows,

Ver. 19. *He chastens him also with pain upon his bed, and makes all his bones to waste away.*

xxiv. 46. By bed, or pallet, or couch in holy Scripture, is understood, sometimes carnal pleasure, sometimes a resting

in good works, sometimes temporal rest; for what is meant by what our Lord said in the Gospel to a certain one who was healed, *Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house,* except that bodily pleasure is signified by bed? And he is specially commanded, when restored to health, to carry that on which he had lain when sick, since every one, who still delights in sin, lies overpowered with fleshly pleasures. But he carries that, when healed, on which he had lain when sick, because when rescued by Divine assistance from his sins, he afterwards endures the insults of that very flesh, in the indulgence of which he used to rest content. But again, by bed, or couch, is designated a resting in good works. Whence the Apostle Peter says, in the Acts of the Apostles, *Æneas, may the Lord Jesus Christ make thee whole; arise, and make thy bed.* For what is meant by *rise*, but leave off the sins which thou hast committed? and what by *make thy bed*, but engage in those means of grace, in which thou oughtest to rest? So that by rising he was to forsake what he had done, and by making his bed, find after what he should have done. And both these points the Prophet briefly sums up, in saying, *Turn aside from evil, and do good.* For to turn aside from evil is to rise from that whereon he lay; but to do good, is to make ready those works that win reward, in which he should rest. But he who turns aside from evil, but does not as yet do what is good, has risen from that whereon he lay, but has not yet made for himself a place wherein he is to rest. And again, bed, or couch, is taken for temporal rest; as it is written, *Thou hast turned all his bed in his sickness.* For when any one, worn out by secular cares, is urged on by Divine grace to forsake the toilsome ways of this world, he is wont to consider how to avoid the attractions of the present life, and to rest from its labours. He presently seeks for himself the station of rest which he desired, and wishes to find a place of cessation from all his labours, as though it were a kind of bed. But because a man while still in this life, in whatever situation, cannot in the secresy of any retirement whatever live without temptations; the pain of temptation is found to press more heavily on that spot, which is contrived for the sake of rest. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, *Thou hast*

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Mat. 9, 6. Mark 2, 11. Luke 5, 24.

Acts 9, 34.

Ps. 37, 27.

Ps. 41, 3.

Job 33, 17—19. *turned all his bed in his sickness.* As if he were to say, All that he has here contrived for himself for the sake of rest, Thou hast by secret judgment converted to his disturbance. And this is so ordained by the merciful design of God, in order that, in the season of his sojourning, the life of the Elect may be exposed to confusion.

47. For our present life is the road by which we journey on to our home[1]: and we are harassed here by frequent disturbances, in the secret judgment of God, expressly that we may not love our road instead of our home. For some travellers, if they see by accident some pleasant meadows on their road, are wont to delay, and to turn aside from the straight path on which they have entered. And the beauty of the road delays their steps, while it affords them pleasure. The Lord then makes the way of this world rugged to His Elect, who are journeying towards Him: in order that no one when enjoying the rest of this present life, as if it were some beauteous road, might take greater pleasure in prolonging the journey than in speedily arriving at its end; or forget, when delighted by the way, what he used to long for in his home. But because all the rest, which we have happened to secure for ourselves in this world, is liable to disturbance, it is well said, *He chastens him also with pain upon his bed*, that is, He disturbs us in the rest of this world, either by the stings of temptation, or by the affliction of the scourge. For if the mind of man has been engaged in virtuous pursuits for ever so short a time, without temptation, it is often, in consequence of those very pursuits, in which it is tranquilly engaged, soon elated by those very virtues, which it is endeavouring to multiply within, from being conscious of the progress it is making. It is therefore exposed to the assaults of temptations, by the merciful dispensation of our Ruler, that thus pride, at the advance it is making, may be checked within it. Wherefore after he had said, *He chastens him also with pain on his bed*, he fitly subjoined, *And makes all his bones to waste away.*

[1] patriam

48. By bones in holy Scripture we understand virtues; as it is written, *The Lord keepeth all his bones; not one of them shall be broken.* Which is specially understood not of the bones of the body, but of the powers of the mind. For

Ps. 34, 20.

we know assuredly, that the bones of many Martyrs were broken in a bodily sense, and the persecutors of the Lord broke the bones of that thief, to whom it was said, *To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise*, as well as those of the other thief on the cross. When He chastens us then with pain on our bed, He makes all our bones to waste away; because when we are assailed with the scourge of temptation, in that rest which we secure for ourselves from this world, we, who might perhaps have been puffed up by our virtues, are brought low by being sore vexed at the knowledge of our infirmity. For when we are advancing as we wish towards God, if no temptation checked our progress, we should believe that we were persons of some strength. But since the Divine dispensation thus deals with us, in order that we may remember our infirmity when tempted, because we forget it when we are advancing, we learn when we advance what we are by the divine gift; and in our temptation what we are by our own strength. But this temptation would in truth entirely hurry us away, did not heavenly protection keep us up. But it strikes us without breaking, it presses on us without moving us, it staggers, but does not cast us down: that we may feel that it is all owing to our own weakness that we are shaken, but that it is the gift of God that we stand firm. But because a soul which is conscious of any good quality in itself, frequently revels in a kind of delight, on calling its virtues to mind, and is bloated as it were by congratulating itself on its own fulness, it is well said that the bones waste away under the assault of temptation. Because while our own weakness is ascertained by the questionings of temptation, all that, as it were, bloated and florid self-congratulation on our own strength, is dried up by the sudden pain of anxiety. And we who, on weighing our good deeds, believed them to be of some value, when smitten somewhat more heavily are afraid that we are about to perish immediately. It is then that all satisfaction at our goodness is changed into fear of punishment. We then discover ourselves to be guilty, though, but just before, we believed ourselves to be saints. Our mind wastes away, our eyes become dull, all the prosperity which used to smile on us vanishes away; the light itself is loathsome, and the darkness

Book XXIII. John 19, 32. Luke 23, 43.

Job 33, 20. of sorrow alone spreads itself over the mind. We see nothing to please us, every thing which comes before us is full of sorrow. Whence it also properly follows,

Ver. 20. *His bread becomes abominable to him in his lips, and to his soul the food which before it desired.*

xxx. 49. As if he were to say in so many words; A mind under affliction believes that every thing which used easily to satisfy, and give it pleasure, is turned into bitterness. For by bread is understood in holy Scripture sometimes the Lord Himself, sometimes spiritual grace, sometimes the instruction of divine teaching, sometimes the preaching of heretics, sometimes sustenance for this present life, sometimes the agreeableness of worldly pleasure. The Lord is signified by bread, as He Himself says in the Gospel, *I am the living Bread, Who came down from heaven.*

John 6, 51.

Again, by bread is understood the grace of spiritual gifts, as is said by the Prophet, *Who stoppeth his ears, that he should not hear of blood, and shutteth his eyes that he should not see evil, he shall dwell in high places, his high place shall be the munitions of rocks, bread is given to him.* For what is to close his ears, not to hear blood, except to refuse consent to those persuasive sins which spring from flesh and blood? or what to close his eyes, not to behold evil, but to disapprove of every thing which is contrary to uprightness? Such an one will dwell in high places; for though the flesh still confines him to things below, he has already fixed his mind on things above. His high place is the munitions of rocks, because he who tramples beneath his feet his longings for worldly conversation, raises himself to his heavenly country by the patterns of the fathers who have gone before. And because he is satisfied with spiritual grace through the gift of contemplation, it is rightly subjoined, *Bread is given him;* that is, he enjoys the refreshment of spiritual grace, because he has raised himself above the goods of the world, by hoping for those of heaven. Hence also the Lord says of Holy Church by David, *I will satisfy her poor with bread;* because the humble-minded who dwell therein are filled with the refreshment of spiritual gifts. Again, by bread is set forth the instruction of heavenly doctrine, as is said by the Prophet, *Ye who dwell in the land of the South, meet with bread him*

Is. 33, 15. 16.

Ps. 132, 15.

Is. 21, 14.

that is flying away. For they dwell in the land of the South who, placed within Holy Church, are breathed upon by the love of the Spirit from on high. But he is flying, who is wishing to escape from the evils of this world. He then who dwells in the land of the South, should meet with bread him that is flying; that is, he who is already full of the Holy Spirit within the Church, should console with words of instruction the man who is endeavouring to escape from his evil ways. To meet with bread him that is flying, is surely to offer the food of sound doctrine to one who is in fear of eternal punishments, and at one while to restrain his pride by fear, and at another to comfort his fears by encouragement. But because by bread is not unfitly understood the refreshment of holy Scripture, it is said by the same Prophet to the Jews who looked only to the letter, *Wherefore do ye spend your money, but not in bread.* As though he were saying, Ye consider the holy words, but not for refreshment, because while ye carefully guard the outward letter alone, ye lose that richness of inward refreshment which results from the spiritua meaning. Whence it is properly subjoined in that passage, *And your labour for that which satisfieth not.* Is. 55, 2.

But again by bread is designated the preaching of heretics; as by Solomon the woman who typifies the congregation[1] of the heretics, and calls together the foolish, says, *Eat ye gladly bread in secret.* Or, as is written in our translation, *Stolen waters are sweeter, and hidden bread is more pleasant.* For there are some heresies which are afraid to preach their views openly, and give a greater flavour to their words in the minds of the weak the more they keep them back, as if through greater reverence. Whence it is not improperly said, *Eat ye gladly bread in secret.* For the secret words of the heretics are more relished by miserable hearts, the more they are not possessed by them in common with other people. Prov. 9, 17.

[1] ecclesiæ

[1] condiunt

But again, by bread is understood the support of this present life; as Jacob, on his way to Laban, says, *O Lord God, if Thou shalt have given me bread to eat, and raiment to put on.* And as the Lord says in the Gospel to the crowds which were following Him, *Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were* Gen. 28, 20. John 6, 26.

Job 33, 20. *filled.* For they had been filled of the seven loaves. And in their persons the Lord expresses His detestation of those within Holy Church, who approaching to the Lord by holy ministrations, do not by those ministrations seek to gain higher virtue, but only sustenance for this present life: nor do they think what example they should imitate in their conduct, but what gains they may obtain so as to be satisfied. For to follow the Lord from being filled with the loaves, is to have gained temporal support from Holy Church. And to seek the Lord not for the miracles' sake, but for bread, is for people to be eager for religious offices, not for the sake of increasing their virtues, but of acquiring a means of support.

Again, by bread is understood the agreeableness of human pleasure. Whence the Prophet Jeremiah said, while lamenting the abandoned habits of the congregation; *All her people sighs and seeks for bread; they have given all their precious things for food to revive the soul.* For the people sighs and seeks for bread, whilst the wicked multitude of men is afflicted, because it is not satisfied, to its heart's desire, with the pleasantness of the present life. And it gives all its precious things for food, because it bows down the virtues of its mind to the desire of transitory pleasure. And it endeavours to revive the soul: because it strives to satisfy its own perverse desires. And hence he immediately well adds in the words of that elect multitude, *See, O Lord, and consider, that I am become vile.* For the People of God becomes vile, when, as the number of the ungodly increases, it engages, in their persons, not in high and heavenly employments, but in worthless and worldly pursuits.

Lam. 1, 11.

50. What else then does Elin mean by bread, but the pleasures of this life? For after having stated the power of temptation, he immediately subjoined, *His bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food which before it desired:* because, in truth, all the sweetness he used before to enjoy from the prosperity of his life, afterwards becomes bitter by the power of temptation. For sometimes whatever joy, and whatever virtue seemed to smile on him, is suddenly lost through fear of temptation, and the sorrowful mind, as if deprived of these very virtues, is possessed by

grief alone. For when it is assailed somewhat more violently by the force of temptation, because it cannot put forth the strength of its usual courage, it laments for it as if it were already lost; and feeling itself emptied of itself, it learns its own weakness, from this its emptiness. And thence it is immediately broken off, as it were, from every pleasure, and loathing the dainty morsels of former delight, takes its fill of that grief which alone it eagerly desires. For every one, when success in holy living smiles favourably on him, is full of mirth: and this very mirth refreshes the mind like pleasurable food. But when he is assailed more sharply by imminent temptation, all joy is through the loathing of grief rejected by his mind, though it used before to rejoice as though fully satisfied with that very joy. Because then a man, when tempted, casts out from the mouth of his heart all pleasurable food, and nothing else gives him pleasure but knowing and lamenting himself, it is well said, *Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food which before it desired.* Book XXIII.

51. But, as we said before, we are allowed to be thus tempted under the government of the secret dispensation, in order that we, who by the Divine gift are making progress in virtue, may call to mind what we are by our own natural infirmity: and that all who produce the deeds of virtue, from having received of the gift, may offer the sacrifice of humility from a remembrance of our own weakness. But sometimes, after we have increased in strength, not only are we assailed by sins, but chastised by scourges. But when we are assailed by sins, we are dealt with by a merciful dispensation, to keep us from being elated by those virtues, in which we are making progress. But when we are scourged with the rod, we are warned, by the chastisement of evil, not to be led away with the blandishments of the world. Whilst our sins tempt us, they bring low the virtues, which are gaining strength within us; whilst scourges try us, they root out the pleasures of this world which are rising in our heart. We learn by our sins, which tempt us, what we are of ourselves; by the scourges, which smite us, what we should avoid in this world. We are restrained by the one from inward pride, we are kept back by the other from desiring any thing without us.

Job 33, 21. As long then as we are in this life, we must needs be scourged by the rod, and at times tempted by our sins. For both in the tortures of the scourge, and in our struggle with our sins, not only does our weakness become known to us, but we learn also what progress we have made in virtue. For no one, when at rest, is conscious of his powers. For if there is no contest, no opportunities arise for making trial of our virtues. He who boasts of his bravery in peace, is but a short-sighted warrior. Since then the quality of our strength is often made known by sufferings of the rod, Eliu appropriately adds, saying,

Ver. 21. *His flesh shall waste away, and his bones which were covered shall be laid bare.*

xxvi. 52. For when every outward pleasure is worn away by the pressure of the rod, the bones of inward firmness are laid bare. For what is meant in this place by the word flesh, but fleshly pleasure itself? Or what by bones, but the virtues of the soul? The flesh therefore wastes away, and the bones are laid bare, because while carnal pleasure is brought to nought by the reproof of scourges, those sturdy virtues are laid open, which had long been concealed, as it were, beneath the flesh. For no one learns what progress he has made, except in adversity. For in prosperity, the evidences of strength cannot be discerned. Whence it is written elsewhere, *The Lord commanded His loving kindness in the day time, and declared it in the night.* Because, in truth, it is in tranquil rest that each man obtains the grace of the heavenly gift, but it is in trouble and adversity that he gives proof how much he has received. Let our flesh then waste away, that our bones may be laid bare. Let us be smitten with the reproofs of a father, that we may know what progress we are making. For by the scourge of the Lord the rankness of carnal pleasure is worn down, but the bones of our virtues are laid bare. Our outward beauty is tarnished by this world's sufferings, but that which was concealed within is made manifest. For when the Apostles had been scourged, they were directed to speak no more in the Name of Jesus. But they rejoiced with exceeding joy, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name of Jesus: and they confidently replied to their adversaries, *We ought to obey*

Ps. 42, 8.

Acts 5, 40. 41.

Acts 5, 29.

God rather than man. See how the strength of their faith shone forth more vigorously in adversity. See how the soundness of the flesh was cut through, but the bones of their virtues were laid open. It is hence said of them by Wisdom, *God proved them, and found them worthy for Himself.* For, though tried by the blows of adversity, they are found worthy by the laying bare of their bones. For that the trial of their scourging is here meant, is plainly declared by what follows, *As gold in the furnace He tried them, and received them as a victim of a burnt offering.* Because, then, each man's strength is made known only by adversity, it is well said, *His flesh shall waste away, and his bones which were covered shall be laid bare.* For the flesh wastes away, while every thing which is perishable and weak is worn away by the scourge. The bones are laid bare, while by these means our latent strength is also made manifest. As we have before said, not merely is the strength of our resolution made known, but also the weakness of our nature laid bare, by the very trials of adversity; and every one shews indeed under trial the progress he has made through God, but also confesses under the very inflictions of the scourges, how weak he is in himself; because not only are the bones laid bare, but the flesh also wastes away. It is appropriately subjoined,

Book XXIII.

Wisd. 3, 5.

ibid. 6.

Ver. 22. *His soul shall draw near to corruption, and his life to the destroyers.*

53. For the soul of every just man when tempted is said to draw near to corruption, when, for fear his virtue should elate him, he is compelled by the rod to feel what he is in his own natural infirmity. He approaches, in truth, to corruption, because he learns that by his own strength he is not far from destruction, in order that he may ascribe not to himself but to the Lord, that he is far from that destruction. But he approaches to the destroyers, because he sees that, through the infirmity of the flesh, he is very near to sins which cause death: and from these he is the farther removed by the Divine goodness, the more he is conscious that by his own deserts he is very near them. By contemplating his own condition, David had drawn near to corruption, when he said, *Remember, Lord, that we are dust; as for man his day*

xxvii.

Ps. 103, 14. 15.

Job 33, 22. *is grass.* Paul also had, by contemplating his own infirmity, approached the destroyers, when he said, *I see another law* Rom. 7, 23. 24. *in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* To approach then to corruption, and to the destroyers, is for a man, on considering the infirmity of our human nature, to see that he is a sinner, as far as concerns his deserts, and that he possesses, of his own strength, no ground of boasting[1] in himself. For what are we, when bereft of the protection of our Maker? a protection which is considered to be less necessary, if always enjoyed. But it is withdrawn, generally, for our good, that it may be shewn to a man's own self how worthless he is without it. The hand of God, then, which bears us up, even when we know it not, in prosperity, brings us to a true knowledge of ourselves in adversity. And when we begin to fall, from being deprived of it, we are yet supported by its aid. It is a warning to us, that we are trembling to our fall, and His protection, that we remain stedfast.

[1] arrogantiam

54. Let no one consider then that he has any real virtues, even if he is able to display any resolution: since, if Divine protection leave him to himself, he is suddenly unnerved and overpowered in that very point in which he used to boast that he was standing firm. For what is meant by the man of God, when directed to prophesy against the altar at Samaria, exerting in the king's presence the authority of bold speaking, by his miraculously withering the extended arm of the rash king, which he afterwards restored to health of his tender pity? by his refusing when invited, to eat in his house, because he kept the commands of the Lord, which forbade him to eat by the way? But yet he was afterwards seduced to eat on the same way, and perished when he had eaten. What do we gather from an accurate examination of this matter, what (if I may so speak) do we fear and suspect, except that he was perhaps silently boasting in himself that he had put contempt on the king in obeying the commands of the Lord? Hence it was that he was soon shaken from his inward stedfastness, and that sin stole on him in his work, from the same source as pride sprang up in his heart; in order that he might learn

1 Kings 13, 1—34.

when deceived by the false prophet, that it was not of his own strength that he had withstood the commands of the king. But he rightly received the sentence of death from the mouth of that very person, by whose seduction he had turned away from the precept of life, in order that he might receive the true announcement of his punishment, from the same quarter by which he had through carelessness admitted a fault. Because then the grace of God more especially guards and instructs each of His Elect, at the very time when He seems to smite and forsake them, let it be rightly said, *His soul shall approach to corruption, and his life to the destroyers;* that so the more he is led by adversity to consider that he is in his own strength nigh unto death, he may, in all cases in which he has acted with resolution, have surer ground of life, by flying to the protection which comes from trust in God.

BOOK XXIV.

The last eleven verses of the thirty-third chapter and the eighteen first verses of the thirty-fourth chapter are expounded, and striking truths are taught concerning Christ the Mediator, contemplation, the course of conversion, and the pastoral office.

Job 33, 23. 24. i. 1. It was in speaking of the power of the Divine dispensation, that Elin observed of the sufferings of each of the Elect, saying, *His soul will draw nigh to corruption, and his life to the destroyers.* And in speaking of the trials of a single person, he shews in what condition of trial the whole human race is placed; and in mentioning what specially befals individuals, he plainly intimates what takes place generally in all. For he so described the temptation of certain persons, taken in themselves one by one, that the temptation of all men in a body might be also understood thereby. For the whole body of the Elect suffers in this life under the pain of this labour. He therefore immediately introduced a general remedy to cure this general malady, saying,

Ver. 23, 24. *If there shall be an Angel, speaking for him one of like things to shew the righteousness of man, he will pity him.*

ii. 2. For who is this Angel, but He who is called by the Prophet, *The Angel of mighty counsel?* For because to declare is called "evangelize" in Greek, the Lord in announcing Himself to us is called 'Angel.' And he well says, *If there shall be a messenger* [*or Angel*] *speaking for him;* because, as the Apostle says, He even intercedes for us. But let us hear what he says for us; *One of like things.* It is the way with medicine to cure disease sometimes by similar, sometimes by contrary, remedies. For it has frequently been wont to cure the hot by warm, and the cold by

Is. 9, 6. lxx. as Is. 63, 9. Rom. 8, 26.

cold, applications; and on the contrary, the cold by warmth, the hot by cold. Our Physician then, on coming to us from above, and finding us oppressed with such great diseases, applied to our ease something of a like, and something of a contrary, nature. For He came to us as Man to men, but as a Just One to those who were in sin. He agreed with us in the truth of His nature, He differed from us in the power of His righteousness. For sinful man could not be amended, except by God. But it was necessary that He who was healing him, should be an object of sight; in order that He might amend our former sinful lives, by setting a pattern for us to imitate. But it was not possible that God could be seen by man; He therefore became man, that He might be seen. The Holy and Invisible God appeared therefore as a visible man, like ourselves; that while He seemed to be of like nature, He might teach us by His holiness. And while agreeing with our condition in verity of nature, He might put a stop to our sickness by the might of His skill. Book XXIV.

3. Because then the Lord, when coming in the flesh, did not bear our guilt for His own fault, nor our punishment as a matter of necessity, (for untainted by spot of sin, He could not be involved in our condition of guilt, and therefore voluntarily underwent our death, when He so willed, every kind of necessity lying beneath His feet[1],) it is rightly said, that that messenger speaks, in behalf of man when tempted, 'one of like things,' because He was neither born as other men, nor was like them in His dying, or His rising again. For He was conceived, not by the cooperation of natural intercourse, but by the Holy Spirit coming on His Mother. And when born He proved the fecundity of His Mother's womb, though preserving its virgin purity. But again, we all die when we do not wish it; because we are constrained through the sinfulness of our nature to pay the debt of punishment. But He, from having no admixture of sin, did not submit to any punishment as a matter of necessity. But because He subdued our guilt by triumphing over[2] it, He underwent our punishment out of pity for us; as He Himself says, *I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.* Who had also said before, *No one taketh it from Me; but I lay it down of Myself.* But again, He was not

[1] 'cal-cata' Luke 1, 35.

[2] al. 'con-demning' John 10, 18.

Job 33, 24. raised again like other men; because our resurrection is deferred to the end of the world, while His was celebrated on the third day. And we indeed rise by Him, for He rises by Himself. For He Who was God needed not, as we, to be raised up by any one else. In this then does His resurrection differ from ours, that we do not rise again of ourselves, as He did. For since we are simply men, we need some superior assistance to enable us to rise. But He as God displayed the same power of raising[1] again with the Father and the Holy Spirit, though He alone in His human nature had experience of it. Because then the Lord, though truly born, truly dead, and truly raised again, differs from us, in all these points, in the greatness of His power, but agrees only in the verity of His nature, it is well said that that Messenger speaks for us *one of like things*. For since He surpasses us in all His doings with His immeasurable power, yet in one point, the verity of His nature, He does not differ from us.

[1] Oxf. Mss. 'resuscitationis.' edd. 'rising.'

4. He speaks in our behalf to the Father, through that in which He shews Himself to be like us. For His speaking or intercession is His proving Himself to be very Man for man's sake. And well, when he had said, *He says one of like things*, he immediately added, *that he might declare the righteousness of man*. Because, if He had not become like unto men, man would not appear just before God. For He announces our righteousness, by the very fact that He deigned to take on Himself our infirmity. For that fatal persuasion had polluted us all with the infection of sin from our very origin; and there was no one who, in speaking to God in behalf of sinners, could appear free from sin; because an equal guilt had involved all alike who were created from the same lump. Therefore the Only-begotten of the Father came to us, and assumed our nature without committing sin. For it was requisite that one who could intercede for sinners should be free from sin, because doubtless He could not wipe away the infection of others' guilt, if He had to bear His own. It is well said then, that in appearing in our likeness He announced righteousness to men. For He proved Himself, in interceding for sinners, to be so righteous a Man as to merit forgiveness for others. It follows,

Heb. 2, 16. 17.

Gen. 3, 3.

Rom. 5, 12.

Ver. 24. *He will pity him, and will say, Deliver him*

from going down to corruption; I have found a way to propitiate for him.

iii. 5. The Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, shews mercy on man, by having assumed the form of a man. Through this compassion He says to His Father on behalf of redeemed man, *Deliver him from going down to corruption.* For as we before said, His saying, *Deliver him*, is His shewing forth man's nature free by taking it upon Him. For by that flesh which He assumed, He proved the freedom of this also which He redeemed. This ransomed flesh is, in truth, ourselves, who are fettered by the consciousness[1] of our guilt. But by the righteousness[2] of so mighty a Redeemer are we set free, as He says Himself, *If the Son hath set you free, ye shall be free indeed.* And in behalf of this ransomed man it is well said, *That he go not down to corruption.* For it had been said above, *His soul shall draw near to corruption.* It is declared afterwards, *That he go not down to corruption.* As if He were to say, Because he is aware, from a sense of his infirmity, that he is not far from corruption, therefore let him not descend to the death of corruption. For he would rightly go down to corruption, if he were to consider that by his own strength he was far removed from it. But because he has approached thereto with humility, he ought to be mercifully delivered therefrom; that the more he confesses he is weak by nature, he may be the more strengthened against the sins which assail him. For whoever extols himself above his proper condition, is weighed down by the very burden of his pride, and plunges himself the lower, the more he has rushed into the sin of pride, and has separated himself far from Him Who is truly exalted; and he sinks the more to the bottom, from the very fact, that he considered himself in union with the highest; as is said by the Prophet to the soul which exalts itself, *The more beautiful thou art, go down, and sleep with the uncircumcised.* For every one who neglects to consider the hideousness of his infirmity, but looks through haughtiness of pride to the credit of his virtue, sinks the lower, from his being more beautiful. Since from priding himself on his merits, he falls into the lowest depths of destruction, on account of the very qualities, for which he considered him-

[1] al. 'condition.'
[2] æquitate. John 8, 36.
Luke 14, 11.
Ez. 32, 19.

Job 33, 25. self worthy of honour. And he descends and sleeps with the uncircumcised, because he perishes in eternal death with other sinners. Because then this man humbly confessed that he was near to corruption, it is well said of him, *Deliver him from going down to corruption;* in order that he may the more escape punishment, from his not turning his eyes towards what is wrong. But because there was no one for whose merits the Lord could have needs been reconciled to us, the Only-begotten of the Father, taking on Himself the form of our infirmity, alone appeared just, in order that He might intercede for sinners.

6. And the Messenger, when speaking in behalf of this ransomed man, well says, *I have found a way to propitiate for him.* As though the Mediator between God and man were plainly to say, Because there was no one to appear before God as a righteous intercessor in behalf of man, I have made Myself a Man, to gain propitiation for mankind; and in manifesting Myself as a Man, I found a way of justly propitiating for him. And because the Lord, in taking on Him infirmity, when He endured our punishment in His death, reversed our corruption by His rising again, that Messenger fitly subjoins the sufferings of our mortal state, and shews pity on them, saying,

Ver. 25. *His flesh is consumed by punishments, let him return to the days of his youth.*

iv. Gen. 3, 23. 24. 7. For when that first man fell from God, we were driven from the joys of Paradise, and were involved in the miseries of this mortal life; and we feel, by the pain of our punishment, what a grievous fault we committed by the persuasion of the serpent. For having fallen into this state, we have found nothing, out of God, except affliction. And because we have followed the flesh, through the sight of the eyes, we are tortured by that very flesh which we preferred to the commands of God. For in it we daily suffer sorrow, in it torture, in it death; that the Lord by a marvellous economy might convert that, by which we committed sin, into a means of punishment; and that the severity of punishment might spring from the same source as that which had given rise to sin; so that man might be disciplined to life by the bitter suffering of that very flesh, by the pride of delighting which he had drawn near to death.

8. Since then the human race was oppressed by the innumerable sufferings of this life in the flesh, but both the guilt and punishment of our sin were blotted out by the coming of our Redeemer, let it be said of redeemed man, *His flesh is consumed with punishments; let him return to the days of his youth.* As if he were to say, Through the punishment of his mortality, he is cast down, as it were, by the age of his old condition; let him return to the days of his youth; that is, let him be renewed in the integrity of his former life, that he may not remain in the state in which he has fallen, but return on his redemption to that for the enjoyment of which he was created. For Holy Scripture is frequently accustomed to put youth for newness of life. Whence it is said to the Bridegroom on his approach, *The young damsels have loved Thee:* that is, the souls of the Elect, renewed by the grace of Baptism, which do not yield to the practices of the old life, but are adorned by the conversation of the new man. For he in truth was bewailing the age of the old man which was wasting away in the midst of sins, who says, *I have become old amongst all mine enemies:* and some one also on the other hand, advising a person to rejoice in virtue, says, *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth.* As though he were saying, Let each man who is strong rejoice in his renewal; that is, let him place his joy not in the pleasures of his old life, but in the virtue of his new conversation. But since we are brought back to this strength of new life, not by our own powers, but by the mediation of the Redeemer, let the Messenger say, in interceding for this man under the rod, *Let him return to the days of his youth.* And because, as our Redeemer intercedes to the Father in our behalf, we ourselves shake off the torpor of our former life, and are inflamed with a thirst for prayer, it is well added of ransomed man,

Solom. Song, 1, 3.

Ps. 6, 7.

Eccles. 11, 9.

Ver. 26. *He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him.*

9. He says that the Messenger implores first, and man afterwards; for did not the Lord first intercede with the Father through His Incarnation, and pray for our life, our insensibility would never rouse itself to ask for those things which are eternal. But the entreaty of His Incarnation came

v.

Job 33, 26. first, that our awakening from sloth might afterwards follow. But because the light of truth bursts forth with secret joy in our hearts, after temptations, and frequently after great griefs, it is rightly added of this man thus tempted, and imploring God,

And he shall see his face in exultation.

vi. 10. It was stated above, how God bears us down[1] by manifesting Himself to us. But it is now stated how He cheers us, while He thus makes Himself known. For a man hath compunction in one sort, when on looking within he is frightened with dread of his own wickedness, and in another when on looking at heavenly joys he is strengthened with a kind of hope and security. The one emotion excites tears of pain and sorrow, the other tears of joy. For it is called exultation, when joy unspeakable is conceived in the mind, a joy which can neither be concealed, nor yet expressed in words. It betrays itself however by certain motions, though not expressed in any suitable words. And hence David the Prophet, on seeing that the souls of the Elect conceive a joy too great for them to bring out in words, declares, *Blessed is the people that knoweth exultation.* For he says not "that speaketh," but "that knoweth," because exultation can be known in the understanding, though it cannot be expressed in words. For that which is too high for feeling, is felt therein. But since the mind of him who feels it is scarce sufficient for its contemplation, how can the tongue of the speaker suffice to tell of it? Because, then, when the light of truth pierces our hearts, it makes us at one time full of sorrow, from its display of strict justice, and delights us at another by disclosing inward joys: after the bitternesses of temptations, after the sorrows of tribulations, it is fitly subjoined, *He shall see his face in exultation.*

[1] afficit

jubilum

Ps. 89, 15.

11. For the fire of tribulation is first darted into our mind, from a consideration of our own blindness, in order that all rust of sins may be burnt away. And when the eyes of our heart are purged from sin, that joy of our heavenly home is disclosed to them, that we may first wash away by sorrow that we have done, and afterwards gain in our transports a clearer view of what we are seeking after. For the intervening mist of sin is first wiped away from the eye of the

mind, by burning sorrow; and it is then enlightened by the bright coruscations of the boundless light swiftly flashing upon it. At which sight, seen after its measure, it is absorbed in a kind of rapturous security; and carried beyond itself, as though the present life had ceased to be, it is refreshed in a manner by a kind of new being. The mind is then besprinkled with the infusion of heavenly dews from an inexhaustible fountain. It there discerns that it is not sufficient for that enjoyment, to which it has been hurried, and from feeling the truth, it sees that it does not discern how great that truth is. And it counts itself to be further removed from this truth, the nearer it approaches to it, because unless it beheld it in a certain degree, it would never feel that it was unable really to behold it. Book XXIV.

12. The effort therefore of the mind is driven back, when directed towards it, by the bright encircling of its boundless nature. For filling all things with itself, it encircles all things; and our mind does not expand itself to comprehend that boundless object which encircles it, because the imperfection of its own circumscribed state keeps it within narrow bounds. It accordingly falls back at once to itself, and having seen as it were some traces of truth before it, is recalled to a sense of its own lowliness. But yet this unsubstantial and hasty vision, which results from contemplation, or rather, so to speak, this semblance of a vision, is called the face of God. For we, who recognise a person by his face, not unnaturally call the knowledge of God, His face. Whence Jacob says, after he had struggled with the Angel, *I have seen the Lord face to face.* As though he were to say, I know the Lord, because He Himself has deigned to know me. But Paul declares that this knowledge will take place most completely in the end, when he says, *Then shall I know, even as I am known.* Because then, after the contests of labours, after the waves of temptations, the soul is often caught up in rapture, in order that it may contemplate a knowledge of the Divine Presence, (a Presence which it can feel, but which it can never fully enjoy,) it is well said of this man who is tempted, after his many labours, *He will see His face in exultation.* But because the more a man contemplates heavenly things, the more does he amend his

Gen. 32, 30.

1 Cor. 13, 12.

Job 33, 26. earthly doings, after the grace of contemplation he fitly adds the righteousness of his doings.

And He will render to man his righteousness.

vii. 13. It is called our righteousness, not as being of ourselves, but as made ours by the Divine bounty: as we say Matt. 6, 11. Luke 11, 3. in the Lord's prayer, *Give us this day our daily bread.* See we both call it ours, and yet pray for it to be given us. For it becomes ours, when we receive it: but yet it is God's, because it is given by Him. And it is therefore God's, as of His gift, and it becomes truly ours, by virtue of our accepting it. It is in this way then that God in this place renders to man his righteousness: not that which he had of himself, but that which he received, having been so created as to have it; and in which, having fallen, he would not continue. God therefore will render to man that righteousness unto which he was created, that he may take delight in clinging to God, that he may dread His threatening sentence, that he may no longer trust the alluring promises of the crafty serpent.

14. For our ancient enemy ceases not daily to do the very same thing which he did in Paradise. For he endeavours to pluck out the words of God from the hearts of men, and to plant therein the false blandishments of his own promising. He day by day softens down the threatenings of God, and invites to the belief of his false promises. For he falsely promises temporal blessings, to soften down in men's minds those eternal punishments which God threatens. For when he promises the glory of this life, what else does he Gen. 3, 5. do but say, *Taste, and ye shall be as gods?* As if he said plainly, Lay hold on worldly desires, and appear lofty in this world. And when he endeavours to remove the fear of the Divine sentence, what else does he say but the very words he Gen. 3, 1. used to our first parents, *Why hath God commanded you that ye should not eat of every tree of paradise?* But because man has, by the Divine gift, recovered on his redemption that righteousness, which he lost long since after his creation, he exerts himself more vigorously against the allurements of crafty persuasion, because he has learnt by experience how obedient he ought to be to the Divine command. And him whom sin then led to punishment, his own punishment now restrains from sin: in order that he may be the more fearful

of offending, the more, through the fear of punishment, he blames the evil he has done. Whence it follows, Book XXIV.

Ver. 27. *He will look on men, and will say, I have sinned.*

15. He would not know himself to be a sinner, if he had not righteousness. For no one detects his own deformity, except when he has begun to be upright. For he who is altogether deformed, cannot perceive what he really is. But he who is conscious that he is a sinner, has begun in some measure to be righteous; and from being righteous, blames his conduct when yet unrighteous. And by this accusation of himself he begins to cleave to God; when, passing a righteous sentence against himself, he condemns that in himself, which he perceives to be displeasing to Him. This man then, having regained his righteousness, exclaims, *I have sinned.* And the expression which precedes deserves notice, *He will look on men;* and it is then subjoined, *and will say, I have sinned.* For some persons know not that they have sinned, because they do not observe men. For were they to observe men, they would more readily acknowledge how much they had fallen beneath men by sin. And though Holy Scripture is sometimes accustomed to put "men" for those who savour the things of men, as the Apostle says, *For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal,* immediately subjoining, *Are ye not men?* Yet sometimes it calls those 'men,' whom reason distinguishes from the beasts, that is, whom it shews to be unaffected by the bestial influence of passions. To whom the Lord says by the Prophet, *Ye, the flock of My pasture, are men.* For the Lord in truth feeds them, whom carnal pleasure does not affect as it does the beasts. But, on the other hand, they who yield to the desires of the flesh, are no longer called men, but beasts. As is said by the Prophet of some who were dying in their sins, *The beasts rotted in their dung*[a]. For for beasts to rot in their dung, is for carnal men to finish their life in the filth of lust. For they are said to be no longer men, but beasts, of whom it is said by the Prophet, *Every one was neighing after his neighbour's wife;* and of whom another Prophet says, *Their flesh is as the flesh of* viii. 1 Cor. 3, 3. Ez. 34, 31. Joel 1, 17. Jer. 5, 8. Ez. 23, 20.

[a] E. V. *The seed is rotten under their clods.*

Job 33, 27. *asses, and their issue the issue of horses.* And hence it is said by David, *Man, when he was in honour, did not understand, he has been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them.* Since then those are called men, who are supported by reason and justice, and those are termed irrational animals, who are slaves to carnal pleasure, it is well said of this penitent, *He will look on men, and will say, I have sinned.* As though it were said, He beholds the examples of holy men, and considering himself in comparison with them, he discovers that he is sinful. For if a person is desirous of most completely learning his real character, he ought no doubt to look at those who are different from himself: that from the comeliness of the good he may measure the extent of his own deformity, by that of the goodness he has left. For by those who possess every good quality in abundance, he rightly considers of what he is in want. And he beholds in their beauty his own deformity, which he is able to endure within himself, but not to perceive. For a man who wishes to judge of darkness ought to look at the light, in order to see by it what to think of that darkness, by which he is prevented from seeing. For if a sinner looks at himself, without having learnt the character of the righteous, he in no way comprehends himself to be a sinner. For he cannot really see himself; for not knowing the brightness of the light, what else, on looking at himself, does he behold but darkness? We ought then to look at the conduct of the righteous, in order to gain an accurate knowledge of our own. For what they seem to be, is proposed as a kind of model for our imitation.

Ps. 49, 20.

16. The life of good men is a living study; whence the same righteous men are not undeservedly termed books in the language of Scripture; as it is written, *The Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books.* For the Book of Life is the very sight of the approaching Judge. In this are written as it were, all His commands, for whoever beholds it, soon understands by the testimony of conscience what he has omitted to do. The Books also are said to be opened, because the conduct of just men, in whom the commands of heaven are

Rev. 20, 12.

seen impressed in act, is then made manifest. And the dead were judged out of those things which are written in the Books; because in the conduct of the righteous, which is set forth, they read as in an open book the good which they refused to do themselves, and are condemned on comparison with those who did it. In order therefore that each one then beholding them may not lament his own omissions, let him now observe in them what he should imitate. And this the Elect do not cease to do. For they study the conduct of their betters, and leave off their more depraved course of conduct.

17. And hence in the Song of Songs it is said to Holy Church by the voice of the bridegroom, *Thy two breasts are like two twin kids of the she goat, which feed among the lilies, until the day breathe, and the shadows incline.* For what are the two breasts, except the two peoples coming from Jewry and from among the Gentiles, who are implanted in the body of Holy Church, by the purpose of wisdom, upon the secret of the heart. And they who are elected from these people, are compared to the young of the she-goat, because they are conscious through their humility that they are weak and sinful; but if any obstacles meet them in the way of worldly impediment, as they are hastening on by the power of love, they bound over them, and with the leaps of contemplation climb to the knowledge of heavenly things. And in order to do this, they study the examples of the Saints who have gone before. Whence they are said to feed amongst the lilies. For what is meant by lilies, but the conduct of those who say with all truth, *We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ?* The Elect, therefore, in order to gain strength to attain the highest eminence, feed themselves to the full by beholding the sweet-scented and pure life of the just. They even now thirst to know the Lord, they burn with the fires of love, to be satiated with the contemplation of Him. But because they are unable to do so while still in this life, they feed meanwhile on the examples of the fathers who preceded them. And hence the time of their feeding on the lilies is appropriately defined by the words, *Until the day breathe, and the shadows incline.* For as long as we are passing along the shades of this mortal state, till the dawn of the eternal day, we need to be refreshed with the examples

Solom. Song, 4. 5. 6.

2 Cor. 2, 15.

Job 33, 27. of the righteous. But when the shade of this temporal corruption has inclined, when this mortal state has passed away, because we behold the light of the day itself within us, we do not seek to be kindled with the love of it by the examples of others. But now, since we cannot as yet behold it, it is specially necessary for us to be roused by looking at the conduct of those who have followed it perfectly. Let us see then how beauteous is the activity of those who pursue their course, and learn how disgraceful is the sloth of the sluggish. For as soon as we behold the conduct of the virtuous, do we condemn ourselves with the punishment of confusion within. Shame presently assails the mind; soon does guilt condemn us with just severity: and we are sore displeased even with that, in which perchance we still disgracefully feel pleasure.

Ez. 43, 10. 11. 18. Whence it is well said by Ezekiel, *Son of man, shew the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be confounded by their iniquities, and measure the fabric, and blush for all that they have done.* For the temple of God is shewn to the children of Israel to their confusion; when it is shewn to sinners to their confusion, with what great sanctity the soul of each righteous person shines forth, which God inhabits by His inspiration; in order that they may see therein the good which they slight, and blush in themselves at the evil which they commit. But to measure the fabric, is accurately to weigh the conduct of the righteous. But while we measure the fabric, we must needs blush at all that we have done: because the more accurately we consider and enquire into the conduct of the good, the more severely do we reprove in ourselves all our iniquity. But the Prophet is rightly told, to shew the temple. For since a sinner makes shifts not to consider the righteousness of the just, he should learn it at all events by the voice of the preacher. But to shew the temple to sinners, is to relate the deeds of the virtuous to those who refuse to consider them of their own accord. They then, as we said, who desire to attain to the highest eminence, must necessarily always attend to the progress of their superiors, in order that they may condemn their own fault with greater severity, as they behold in them a higher object of admiration.

19. But why do we say this of sinners, when we see the workers of righteousness themselves also carried forward with so high a dispensation? For one receives the gift of wisdom, and yet reaches not the grace of extraordinary abstinence. Another is endowed with great power of abstinence, but yet is not enlarged in the loftiest contemplation of wisdom. Another is able to foresee all future events by the spirit of prophecy: but yet cannot alleviate the evils of present annoyance, by the gift of healing. Another by the gift of healing alleviates the evils which immediately annoy us, but yet, from not possessing the spirit of prophecy, is ignorant of the future. Another is able to give liberally to the indigent much of what is his own, but yet cannot boldly confront the evil doers. Another boldly confronts evil doers, in God's behalf, but yet refuses to give all his goods to the needy. Another by already constraining himself even from idle talk, subdues the wantonness of the tongue, but yet does not trample down the emotions of anger which still rise within him. Another now perfectly controls his rising passion, but still allows his tongue full range in pleasantry. What is it then, that this man needs that good quality, in which another is strong, and that another, though powerful in many ways, yet sighs for the lack of those excellencies, which he observes others abundantly enjoying? Except it be that we are so dealt with by a marvellous dispensation, that by means of this which another enjoys, and this man has not, the one may be shewn to be superior to the other: so that the more a man considers, from the virtues which he has not, that he is inferior to those that possess them, he may the more eagerly advance towards humility. And thus it comes to pass, that while they behold in each other something to admire, their separate virtues both keep them from loftiness of pride, and kindle in them a desire after greater progress. For we prepare ourselves with great anxiety to undertake our own improvement, when we observe in others that virtue which we have not ourselves. Whence the prophet Ezekiel, when he had described the flying animals, subjoined, *And I heard behind me a voice of a great commotion*, saying, *Blessed be the glory of the Lord, from His holy place, and the sound of the wings of the living creatures, striking one against the* Book XXIV. Ez. 3, 12. 13.

Job 33, 27. *other.* For what must we understand by the wings of living creatures, but the virtues of the Saints? For when they despise the things of earth, they rise on their wings to heaven. Whence it is rightly said by Isaiah, *They who trust in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall take wings as eagles.* The flying creatures then strike one another with their wings, because the minds of the Saints, in their desires after heavenly things, are urged on by the mutual consideration of each other's virtues. For a man strikes me with his wing, who kindles me with desire of better things by the example of his own holiness. And I strike with my wing the next living creature, if ever I present to another person a good deed for him to imitate.

Is. 40, 31.

20. But since we have said that the conduct of holy men is signified by these living creatures, let us raise our eyes to the light, and consider attentively with what mutual beating of their wings they excite each other. For Paul, when he surpassed the carefulness of other holy men, by labouring more vigorously in preaching, that he might keep himself from pride, and nourish his strength in the bosom of humility, declares in remembrance of his former cruelty, and on contemplating the innocence of all the Apostles, *For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.* And yet the chief of these same Apostles, as though in forgetfulness of the preeminence conferred on him, as if he were endowed with less wisdom, admires the wisdom which was in Paul, saying, *As our most beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood.* Lo, Paul admires innocence in the Apostles; lo, the chief of the Apostles admires wisdom in Paul. What then is this, except that holy men who mutually prefer others to themselves, from a consideration of their virtues, as flying animals touch each other with the stroke of their wings, in order that they may excite each other to higher flights, the more humbly they observe something in each other to admire? We must therefore infer from hence how anxiously we, who are lying

1 Cor. 15, 9.

primus, principatus.

2 Pet. 3, 15. 16.

in the lowest depth, should study the lives of those who are our superiors; if even they, who have already arrived at such a height of sanctity, are ever looking out for something to admire and imitate in others, in order that by walking in humility they may advance to greater things. Book XXIV.

21. But of these things the reprobate are ignorant: for they ever fix their eyes on the lowest objects. And if ever they come into the way of the Lord, they proceed not to trace the footsteps of those who are better, but always to look at the examples of those who are worse than themselves. Nor do they look at the conduct of those to whom they may humbly consider themselves inferior, but of those to whom they may proudly prefer themselves. For they look at those who are worse than themselves, to whom they boast that they are preferable, and therefore they cannot advance to better things, because they consider it sufficient for them that they surpass the very worst. Wretched men! they go on in their way, and yet look backward. In their hope indeed they do as it were put a foot before; but in looking to evil examples they turn their eyes behind them. They are anxious to appear upright, but take a crooked standard by which to find that they are such. For if they wish to know themselves as they really are, they should look at the examples, not of those who are worse, but of such as are better, than themselves. And therefore they are not conscious that they are sinners, because they do not look at 'men.' For were they to look at men, they would discover how far removed they were from good men, by their sins. Of this penitent then, who considers the examples of good men, in order to make it clear to himself how grievously he has departed from goodness, it is well said,

Ver. 27. *He will look on men, and will say, I have sinned, and have truly done wrong, and I have not received as I deserved.*

22. Those even who do not believe that they have sinned, generally confess themselves sinners. For it is frequently the case, that men openly confess themselves sinners, but on hearing a true account of their sins, when other persons attack them, they boldly defend themselves, and endeavour to appear innocent. Every one, then, of this character, if he ix.

Job 33, 28. says that he has sinned, speaks untruly; inasmuch as he proclaims himself a sinner not from the inmost heart, but in words only. For since it is written, *The just man in the beginning accuseth himself*[a], he wished to gain credit, not to be humbled, by confessing his sin: he desired, by accusing himself, to appear humble, without being so. For did he really wish to be humble, by confessing his sin, he would not attack others when convicting him of the commission of it. The righteous then, in passing sentence on his own conduct, knows from the bottom of his heart, by the examples of holier men, that he really is what he professes to be. For he says, *I have sinned, and have truly done wrong.* And adds further of the very pain which he is enduring, *and have not received as I deserved.*

Prov. 18, 17.

23. For every one when under the rod, thinks still less of his sins, if he considers that he has been smitten either as, or more than, he deserved. But this man, because the more he considers the examples of greater men, the more strictly does he weigh and test himself, acknowledges that he was smitten less than he deserved. Because he sees, from their righteousness, how heinous is the guilt of his own erring, and does not feel his suffering to be severe, from having learned to pass a severe sentence on his own conduct. But it is very easy for a man, when suffering nothing on account of his sins, to confess himself a sinner. We fearlessly call ourselves unrighteous, when we feel no vengeance for our unrighteousness. For in a time of tranquillity we call ourselves sinners, but when chastened for these very sins, by the blow which falls on us, we murmur. Punishment then puts us to the test, whether we truly acknowledge our fault. Let a righteous man then, from regarding his fault severely, say, even under the rod, *I have not received as I deserved.* It follows,

Ver. 28. *For he hath delivered his soul from going onwards to destruction.*

x. 24. Because when Divine Grace goes before us in good works, our free will follows it, we, who yield our consent to God Who delivers us, are said to deliver ourselves; and hence Paul when saying, *I laboured more abundantly than they all*, for fear he should seem to ascribe his labours to

1 Cor. 15, 1.

[a] E. V. He that is *first in his own cause* seemeth *just.*

himself, immediately added, *Yet not I, but the grace of God* which was *with me*. For since he had followed with his free-will the preventing grace of God in him, he properly adds, *with me*, that he might neither be unthankful for the Divine gift, nor yet remain a stranger to the merit of free-will. But of him, who by gaining a knowledge of himself consented to Him Who set him free, he rightly says[1], *He hath delivered his soul from going onwards to destruction.* It follows, Book XXIV.

[1] al. it is rightly said.

But that it should live, and see the light.

That is to say, the light of truth, which he could not see when dead in heart. Or certainly, because the Lord has said, *I am the Light of the world*, even the dead also shall behold the light, when all the ungodly shall have seen Him coming to judgment in the form of Manhood. But he lives, or beholds the light at that time, who has the eyes of his heart set free, and beholds Him in the form of the Godhead. It follows, John 8, 12.

Ver. 29. *All these things God worketh three times with every man.*

25. Of this man tempted and beaten by the scourge it had been said before, *His bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and his soul hath drawn nigh to corruption, and his life to the destroyers.* But it was subsequently added, *He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him, and he will see His face with joy; and he hath delivered his soul from going onward to destruction, but that it should live, and behold the light.* In these expressions, then, now collected and accumulated together, the bitterness of sorrow precedes, the joy of security comes after. And it is presently added, *All these things God worketh three times with every man.* As if he were to say, What I have said once of one person only, takes place three times in every person. But we must carefully consider what are these three times, wherein each man is affected with anxiety and sorrow, and is immediately after sorrow called back to the security of joy. For, as I before said, he had stated above, that grievous sorrow first depresses[2] us, and that great delight raises us up afterwards. If we watch then attentively, we find that these three stages of sorrow and joy succeed each other, in the mind of each xi. ver. 22. ver. 26.

[2] afficit.

Job 33, 29. of the Elect, in these following ways, that is to say, in his conversion, his temptation, and his death.

26. For in that first occasion of conversion, which we have mentioned, great is the sorrow of a man, when, from considering his own sins, he wishes to burst the fetters of worldly cares, and to walk in the way of God along the course of a secure conversation, to cast aside the heavy burden of temporal anxieties, and to bear the light yoke of the Lord, in a bondage akin to freedom. For as he thinks on these things, there occurs to his mind that old familiar carnal pleasure, which, from having become inveterate, binds him the closer, the longer it has held him; and is the more loath to permit him to escape. And then what pain is there, and what anxiety of heart, when the Spirit calls him on one side, the flesh calls him back on the other, his love for his new life invites him on the one hand, his old depraved habits assail him on the other: on the one side he glows with longings for his heavenly country, and on the other has to bear in himself that desire of the flesh, which pleases him to a certain degree, even against his will? Of a man thus embittered it is rightly said, *His bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and his soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the destroyers.* But because Divine Grace does not suffer us to be long exposed to these difficulties, it bursts the chains of our sins, and leads us quickly by its consolation to the liberty of our new life; and the joy which succeeds makes up for the former sorrow. And thus the mind of every one when converted rejoices the more on attaining its wishes, the more it remembers the pain it has endured in its endeavours after them. Unbounded is the joy of the heart: because in its hope of security it now draws near to Him, Whom it desires; so that it can rightly be said of it, *He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him, and he shall see His face with joy.* Or without question, *He hath delivered his soul from going onwards to destruction, but that it should live, and see the light.*

27. But for fear a man should believe himself holy immediately on his conversion, and security should overthrow him,

whom the contest with pain could not overpower, he is permitted, in the dispensation of God, after his conversion, to be wearied with the assaults of temptations. The Red sea was already crossed by his conversion, but enemies still oppose him to the face while in the wilderness of this present life. We leave already our past sins behind us, as the Egyptians dead on the shore. But destructive vices still assail us, as fresh enemies to obstruct the way on which we have entered to the land of promise. Our former offences, as enemies who were pursuing us, have been already laid low by the power of God alone. But the assaults of temptations meet us to our face like fresh enemies, to be overcome with our own endeavours also. Conversion in truth produces security: but security is commonly the parent of negligence. To keep security from generating carelessness, it is written, *My son, in coming to the service of God, stand in justice and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation.* Ecclus. 2, 1. For he says, not for rest, but for temptation, because our enemy is the more eager to conquer us as long as we are in this life, the more he discerns that we are rebelling against him. He cares not to buffet those, of whom he perceives that he can hold quiet possession. But he is excited the more vehemently against us, inasmuch as he is expelled from our hearts, as if from the rightful possession of his own habitation. It was this, which the Lord, in a kind of economy, typified in His own person. For he did not permit the devil to tempt Him till after His Baptism: suggesting to us thereby as a kind of sign of our own future conversion, that His members would have to endure more severely the wiles of temptation, after they were beginning to advance Godwards. Mat. 4, 1. After the first occasion then of sorrow and joy, which every one feels in his endeavour after conversion, does this second time succeed. Because a man is assaulted with the attack of temptations, in order that he may not become relaxed by the carelessness of security. And he is generally welcomed with great sweetness of consolation, at the beginning of his conversion, but he experiences afterwards the severe labour of probation.

28. There are in truth three states of the converted; the beginning, the middle, and the perfection. But in this

Job 33, 29. commencement they experience the charms of sweetness, in the mid-time the contests of temptations, but in the close the plenitude of perfection. Sweets then are first their portion, to comfort, afterwards bitternesses to exercise, and at last transcendent delights to confirm them. For every man too first soothes his bride with sweet blandishments, though he tries her when now united to him, with sharp reproofs, and possesses her, when she is proved, with thoughts of security. And hence also the people of Israel, on being summoned out of Egypt, when God betrothed Himself to the sacred marriage of the soul, was vouchsafed at first, in the place of pledges, the allurement of miracles; but, after marriage, is exercised with trials in the wilderness, and after trial, is confirmed in the land of promise with the plenitude of virtue. It first then tasted in the miracles that which it was to seek for; afterwards it was tried by hard trial, to prove whether it could keep safely what it had tasted; and at the last it also deserved to obtain a fuller enjoyment of that, which it had kept safe when put to the test of suffering. A gentle commencement therefore thus soothes the life of every convert, a rugged course proves it in the way, and afterwards full perfection gives it strength.

29. For converts are frequently granted either the most perfect tranquillity in the flesh, or the gifts of prophecy, or the preaching of doctrine, or signs and wonders, or the grace of healing, immediately on their first commencement. But after this they are harassed by the severe trials of temptations, from which, when they first began, they believed themselves entirely free. And it is thus ordained in the dispensation of Divine Grace, to keep them from being assailed with sharp temptations at their first beginning. For if bitter temptations were to befal them at the first, they would fall back with ease on the sins they had abandoned, as having removed but a little distance from them. For they would be again involved from their very nearness, in the sins they first despised. Whence it is also written,

Exodus 13, 17. *When Pharaoh had let the people go, the Lord led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, which is near, thinking lest perhaps they would repent, if they had seen war rising up against them, and might return to*

Egypt. War[1] then is removed out of the way of those who were coming out of Egypt: because, to those who leave the world, there is presented at first a kind of tranquillity, lest from being alarmed in the tenderness of their first beginning, they should return, through fear, to that world from which they have escaped. They feel, then, first the sweetness of security, they are first nurtured in quietness and peace. But having tasted this sweetness, they endure more patiently the contests with temptations, as they have found in God a higher object of affection. Whence also Peter is first led up into the mountain, first beholds the brightness of the Lord's transfiguration, and then is afterwards suffered to be tempted by a maid who questioned him; in order that, having become conscious of his state by his weakness under trial, he might recur with sorrow and love to the sight which he had beheld; and that, when the wave of fear was sweeping him onwards to the ocean of guilt, there might be an anchor of former sweetness, to keep him back. But the struggles with temptations frequently last as long, as the allurements on the first commencement. But frequently there is greater pleasure given at first, and less trial in the season of labour: and frequently again less pleasure at first, and greater trial in the time of labour. But a disproportionate perfection of strength never succeeds the labour of temptation: because every one is rewarded with the plenitude of perfection, according to the result of the contest. But a convert commonly fails, from believing that he has received the confirmation of perfection, when he is welcomed with certain gifts of grace, in the sweetness of his first beginning: and, from not knowing that they are only the comforts given to beginners, he regards them as the consummation of fulness. Whence it happens, that if assailed by any sudden storm of temptation, he suspects that he is overlooked by God, and lost for ever. But if he were not to place such full reliance on his first commencement, he would, when still prosperous, be preparing his mind for adversity, and would afterwards resist the assaults of sin with the more firmness, as having also foreseen them with greater sagacity. For, by foreseeing these evils, he bears them with greater calmness. But though he foresees, he does not at all decline the contest with them, for the

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[1] read 'bella'

Mat.17, 1.

Mat.26, 69.

Job 33, 29. course of our journey is not brought to a close without going through the dust of temptation.

30. But every convert is generally assailed with such temptations, as he never remembers to have been attacked with, before the grace of conversion: not because this same root of temptation did not then exist, but because it did not shew itself. For the mind of man, when engaged with numberless thoughts, frequently remains in a manner unknown to itself, so as to be quite ignorant of what it is suffering: for while it is distracted with many matters, it is diverted from the inward knowledge of itself. But if it desires to have leisure for thinking upon God, and lops off the branches of distracting thought, it then beholds without obstruction, that which springs forth from the inmost depths of the flesh. For if a thistle is growing in the road, it is crushed by the feet of those who journey along it, and its surface is worn away by the constant passing of travellers, so as not to appear. But though the thorns do not shew themselves above and bear fruit, yet the root still remains concealed beneath. But if the feet of travellers have ceased to bruise and tread it down, whatever living power remained buried in the root soon rises to the surface, and shews itself. It advances in its growth, and comes into view by the thorns that it bears. So also in the heart of the worldly minded, some secret root of temptations seems to grow up with difficulty; for placed as it were in the pathway of daily life, it is crushed by the feet of thoughts which pass over it, and is so trodden down by countless cares, as if by many travellers, as not to be seen. But if the crowd of anxieties is removed by the grace of conversion from the pathway of the heart, so that no importunity of business wears, nor any tumultuous thoughts oppress it, then that which was before concealed is discerned, then the thorn of temptation, springing from the root of sin, freely inflicts its wound. But the hand of the righteous so acts against it, that, as far as may be, it is not covered and concealed, but torn up by the very roots. But till this is done, this thorn so troubles the mind of every convert, that he frequently feels as if nearly overwhelmed by sudden temptation, and fears that its wound has been inflicted with fatal effect to the very quick.

31. But these assaults of temptation are frequently prolonged when they become common, and become, not sharper, but of longer duration. And then they cause less pain, but do more hurt: for the longer they keep hold of the mind, the less terrible do they become, the more usual they are. The mind therefore, when involved in these trials, is distracted here and there, and is confused by the manifold assaults of temptations, and frequently, when summoned from one point to another, it knows not which assailing sin to oppose, or which first to assault itself. It is hence frequently the case that, while rebellious sins severely torture, while they drive to the very brink of desperation the mind of the person who withstands them, a convert is afraid of this very heavenward path, which he chooses as a remedy, and that he stumbles, as it were, when brought to the summit, who used to stand more firmly at the bottom. But he is so hard pressed by the movements of temptations, which rage around him, that it may be rightly said of him, *His bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food which before it desired;* or without question, *His soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the destroyers.* But because God in His mercy suffers us to be proved by our temptations, not to be cast away, (as it is written, *But God is faithful, who does not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it,*) He speedily succours us with the aid of consolation, assuages the rising pangs of temptations, and calms with inward peace the emotions of the thoughts which rise up against Him. And then the mind soon derives great delight from its hope of heaven, on beholding the evil, which she had endured, overpowered. So that of this man tempted and delivered it may be justly said, *He shall see His face with joy;* and, *He hath delivered his soul from going onward to destruction, but that it should live and behold the light.* When these two stages then, that is of conversion and probation, have been passed in sorrow and in joy, there yet remains the third, whose sorrow he has still to fear, and whose pleasures he has to obtain.

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ver. 22.

probari reprobari.

1 Cor. 10, 13.

32. For after the struggle of conversion, after the pain of

Job 33, 29. probation, there still remains a hard temptation; because he cannot arrive at the joys of perfect liberty, without the debt of human nature is first paid. But every convert, being careful and anxious for himself, ceases not to consider secretly with himself, with what strictness the eternal Judge is coming, and he daily looks forward to his own end, and before the approach of such severity of justice, considers what account he will have to render for his conduct. For though he has avoided all evil deeds, which he could tell to be such, yet as having to come before a strict Judge, he is the more afraid of those faults, of which he is not conscious in himself. For who can understand how many evils we commit every instant, by the irregular motions of our thoughts? For it is easy enough to avoid deeds of wickedness, but very difficult to cleanse the heart from unlawful thoughts. And yet it is written, *Woe to you who think on that which is unprofitable.* And again, *In the day when the Lord shall judge the secrets of men,* after having said before, *Their thoughts mutually accusing or excusing one another.* And again, *Crafty lips in heart, and in heart they have spoken evil.* And again, *For in your heart ye work iniquity on the earth.* But when the soul has once forsaken the stability of eternity, and has sunk down to the instability of temporal things, it is obliged against its will to endure, in endeavouring to rise, that fluctuation of alternating emotions, which it sought of its own accord when willing to fall. And thus it is punished by its former pleasures, because it endures, as converted, the labour of the contest, in the very same things in which it sought while perverted the delight of pleasure. And frequently that very sin, which they skilfully detect in themselves, and of whose grievous guilt they are conscious in the sight of God, steals into the thoughts of the Elect against their will. And though they are ever afraid of a strict judgment for all these things, they then especially dread it, when on coming to pay the debt of nature, they see that they are drawing near the severe Judge. And their fear is the more acute, the nearer their eternal retribution approaches. But no empty imagination from the fancy of the thought flits at that time before the eyes of the heart: because when every thing else has been removed,

Micah 2, 1.
Rom. 2, 16.
ib. 15.
Ps. 12, 2; 58, 2.

they think of themselves only, and of Him, Whom they are approaching. Their fear increases, as the retribution of righteousness approaches nearer. And as the dissolution of the flesh is hastening on, the more the strict judgment comes, as it were, within their reach, the more mightily is it dreaded by them. And though they never remember to have passed over the things they know, they are yet afraid of those sins of which they are ignorant. Because, namely, they are unable fully to understand, and pass sentence on themselves, and, as their end draws nigh, they are harassed by more subtle fear. Whence our Redeemer, approaching His dissolution, and maintaining a resemblance to His members, fell into an agony, and began to pray at greater length. For what could He be asking for Himself when in agony, Who used, when on earth, to confer heavenly gifts with power? But on the approach of death, He represented in His own person the struggle which exists in our minds; who suffer a violent fear and dread, on approaching, through the dissolution of the flesh, to the eternal judgment. Nor is a man's mind at that time unseasonably alarmed, when it finds, after this brief state of being, that it must remain unchanged for ever. Book XXIV.

33. For we consider, that we have by no means been able to pass through the course of this present life without guilt. We consider also, that even what we have done creditably, is not exempt from a degree of guilt, if we are judged without mercy. For who of us can surpass or even equal the doings of the fathers who have gone before us? And yet David says, *Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.* Paul when saying, *I am conscious of nothing to myself*, cautiously added, *Yet am I not hereby justified.* James says, *For in many things we offend all.* John says, *If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* What will then the planks do, when the columns tremble? Or how will the shrubs remain unmoved, if even the cedars are shaken with the whirlwind of this fear? The soul then even of the righteous is frequently disturbed with the dread of punishment, as it approaches the dissolution of the flesh. And though it may have tasted some tranquillity in this life, it is staggered when the instant of its death comes on; so pietate Ps. 143, 2. 1 Cor. 4, 4. James 3, 2. 1 John 1, 8.

Job 33, 29. that it may be rightly said of him, *His bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food which before it desired.* Or certainly, on account of the punishment of fear, that which is there subjoined, *His soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the destroyers.*

34. But because the souls of the righteous are frequently purified, through the mere fear of death, from every trifling pollution, and enjoy the pleasures of eternal recompense from the very moment of the dissolution of the flesh; nay very often they rejoice at the sight of the inward recompense, even before they are stripped of the flesh; and because even while paying the debt of their old nature, they enjoy the satisfaction of the new gift, it is therefore rightly said, *He shall see His face with joy.* Or certainly, *He hath delivered his soul from going onward to destruction, but that it should live and see the light.* The soul of the righteous beholds the face of God with joy, because it feels so much of inward happiness, as it can scarce contain even when taken up to God. It therefore lives there and beholds the light, because it fixes its spiritual gaze on the rays of the eternal sun. It lives there and beholds the light, because having trampled under foot all the vicissitudes and shadows of mutability, it clings to the reality of eternity. And by clinging thus to Him Whom it beholds, it attains to a resemblance of His unchangeableness, and as it gazes at the unalterable nature of Him Who made it, it assumes it to itself. For that which has fallen through its own act into a state of change, is transformed to an unchangeable condition by beholding the Unchangeable. Eliu therefore, because he first spoke of the bitterness of sorrow, and afterwards of the joy of consolation, fitly added of this man thus afflicted and thus delivered, *All these things God worketh three times in every man*, that is to say, in conversion, in probation, and in death. For in these three states, a man first suffers under sharp pangs of sorrow, and is afterwards comforted by great pleasures of security. But because the mind of each of the Elect suffers in each of these three stages, that is, in the pain of conversion, the trial of probation, or the dread of dissolution, and is purified and set free by this very suffering, it is appropriately added,

Ver. 30. *That he may recal their souls from corruption, and enlighten them with the light of the living.* Book XXIV.

35. For that is the light of the dying which we behold with our bodily eyes. But they who still live for this world, are in darkness in the light of the dying. But they are enlightened with the light of the living, who despising the light of the world, return to the splendor of the inward brightness, that they may live in that place where they may see, by feeling it, the true light, where light and life are not different from each other, but where the light itself is life also; where the light so encircles us from without as to fill us within; and so fills us within, as, being itself uncircumscribed, to circumscribe us without. They are enlightened therefore with this light of the living, which they behold at that time the more clearly, the more purely they now live by its aid. xii.

36. Eliu has uttered great and very powerful words. But it is a characteristic of every boastful person, that, while giving utterance to truths and mysteries, he suddenly blends with them, through pride of heart, some foolish and proud expressions. For he endeavours to please the world without, in that which he thinks with truth; and is soon despoiled of the truth, just as through haughtiness of pride he goes back from what is inward. For, because he seeks to be approved of outwardly as a man of learning, he loses inwardly the fulness of wisdom, in which he was instructed. Whence also Eliu, (who, as we have often said, represents the arrogant,) having put forth many profound and wise sayings, as soon as he has uttered these sentiments of truth and mystery, is elated by being puffed up with pride at his wisdom. And as his pride rightly deserved, his feeling soon vents itself in empty words. For he subjoined, saying,

Ver. 31—33. *Attend, O Job, and hearken unto me, and hold thy peace while I speak. But if thou hast any thing to say, answer me; speak: for I wish thee to appear just. But if thou hast not, hearken unto me; hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.*

37. He shews what opinion he has of himself by this expression in which he says, *Attend, O Job, and hearken* xiii.

Job 33, 31—33. *unto me, and hold thy peace while I speak.* For it is enormous pride to exact respect from one's elder, and to impose silence on one better than one's self. But because holy preachers, when reproving others, frequently turn back to their own inmost thoughts, through the grace of humility, and seek to ascertain if perchance they are mistaken, in the very thing which they reprove, and give those, whom they reprove, the liberty of stating, in their own behalf, whatever they think more just, haughty men also sometimes wish to imitate this plan. For putting aside, for a while, their pride in words, they seek for a justification of those whom they reprove, if perchance they are able to find one. Not because it is their real feeling, but they wish to set themselves off by a show of humility. For they are afraid of appearing to be proud and haughty, because they are so. Whence Eliu immediately subjoined, saying, *But if thou hast any thing to say, answer me; speak, for I wish thee to appear just.* But because he did not say this sincerely, he did not wait to hear that which he had asked for. For he added immediately, *But if thou hast not, hear me; hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.* For those who sincerely seek to hear what is just, patiently wait to hear what they seek for. But Eliu, because he did not sincerely put forth the words of request, did not allow his question to be answered, but immediately burst forth with that, of which he was full within, and shewed how he stood in his own eyes, by saying, *Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.* For when proud men say any thing which has a humble sound, they do not long remain in the semblance of this same humility. If they perchance ask to have an answer, they immediately avoid being instructed, by beginning to speak; because the desire of display which springs up from its root in the heart soon checks the words which they had spoken superficially. And they soon prove that this form of humility, which they have assumed in appearance only, is foreign to their character, by being unable any longer to maintain it. Behold how Eliu, when he seeks to learn righteousness, offers to teach it. Behold how his tongue, in seeming to enquire for what is just, had spoken in humble strain. But it was soon unable to restrain his swelling consciousness of pride. For he

added immediately, *Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.* But because haughty men are puffed up by swelling pride in what they say, and placed, as it were, on high, assume the appearance of learned men, just as if their words were poured forth from heaven by a kind of condescension, over undeserving persons, a verse is rightly inserted by the writer of this history, in order to observe, Book XXIV.

Chap. xxxiv. 1. *Eliu also pronounced and said these things likewise.*

38. For what is meant by this word "pronounced" but the puffing up of pride? in order that his words, which spring from the deep root of pride, might come forth as it were with a degree of majesty and distinction. It is thus in truth that all men of arrogance are wont to speak. For they bring forth with a kind of assumption that which they believe they have gained a special understanding; and perhaps are preaching humility at the very time, when they are giving an example of haughtiness by being puffed up with pride. And hence it is that their preaching cannot remain consistent with itself; for by their perverse pride they impugn that truth, which they disseminate when they speak properly. For they impart their words to their humble auditors, not as if entering into their feelings, but as if barely condescending to them. For they consider that they are exalted on high, and, as if they were far superior, they hardly deign to turn towards their hearers, from their high eminence, a glance of doctrine. But the words of the just spring, on the other hand, from the root of humility, in order to be able to bear the fruit of piety: and they impart whatever sound advice they can, not by boasting, but by sympathising with others. For, by words of love, they so put either themselves into the place of their hearers, or their hearers into theirs, as if their hearers were teaching by their aid that, which they are being taught, and they were learning from their hearers that, which they are putting forth and teaching themselves. Let us hear then what Eliu says, representing as he does the boastful, and commencing with the display of pronouncement. It follows, xiv.

Ver. 2, 3. *Hear my words, O ye wise men, and listen to*

Job 34, 4—8. *me, ye learned. For the ear trieth words, and the throat discerneth meats by the taste.*

xv. 39. As if he were to say, as the ear does not discern meats, nor the throat words, so a fool does not understand the sentence of the wise. Hear therefore what I say, ye wise and learned, who can understand the meaning of what has been said. Let us see then how great is his pride, who imagines that his words can be fitly heard only by the wise. But the true preacher of wisdom says, *I am a debtor both to the wise, and to the unwise.* Rom. 1, 14. But the arrogant, on the other hand, in his preaching looks only for the ears of the wise. And this not because he preaches for the purpose of making men wise, but he seeks for wise men, in order that he may proudly display his sentiments. For, as was said before, he does not seek to instruct them, but to display himself. Nor does he consider how righteous those that hear him become, but how learned he appears, when listened to by the learned. But since no one would listen to the preaching of the proud, if they did not throw in some semblance of humility; Eliu, after having extolled himself with swelling words, again condescends, as it were, to put himself on a level of equality; saying,

Ver. 4. *Let us choose to us judgment, and let us see among ourselves what is the best.*

xvi. 40. But we easily learn, by considering the words which follow, whether he sought for this judgment from humility of heart. It follows,

Ver. 5, 6. *For Job hath said, I am just, and God hath subverted my judgment. For in judging me there is falsehood: and mine arrow is violent without any sin.*

He complains that Job had spoken these things, which the words of the sacred history prove on examination that he had never said. But he, who had sought for a judgment on equal terms, proceeds to promulgate a sentence from a fault of his own invention. For it follows, See chap. 27, 2.

Ver. 7, 8. *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water, who goeth with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men?*

Behold, in seeking a judgment, he has pronounced a judgment; and after his own allegation, without waiting for

any statement of blessed Job, he condemned him as deserving of condemnation from his intercourse with the wicked. For he says, *What man is like Job?* That we may be sure to understand, No one. And he subjoins, *Who drinketh up scorning like water.* For water, when drunk, is so liquid a draught, that it is not kept from being swallowed by any clamminess that it has. But to drink up scorning as water, is to mock God without any impediment in one's thoughts, so that no fear opposes the pride, which the tongue or the mind displays. But how far this judgment of his upon blessed Job errs from the roadway of truth, we learn from that solemn declaration of God, in which He says to the devil, *Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth?* Behold how Eliu declares him to be a sinner beyond comparison, whom the Truth pronounces to be righteous beyond comparison. But it is the peculiar way with haughty preachers, that they are more desirous of strictly reproving their hearers even when distressed, than to cherish them in a kindly manner. For they study more to chide and reprove faults, than to encourage goodness with praise. For they are anxious to appear superior to other people, and they are better pleased when anger raises their feelings than when charity brings them down. They ever wish to find something, to smite sharply with reproof. Whence it is written, *In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride*, because in truth he knows how to smite sharply, but not to sympathize with humility.

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Job 1, 8.

Prov. 14, 3.

41. Holy preachers are also accustomed to reprove their hearers with sharp words, and to rage with strict severity against their sins: as it is written, *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened deep.* But their words are rightly called nails, since they do not know how to handle gently the sins of offenders, but how to pierce them through. Were not the words of John nails, when he said, *O generation of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come?* Were not the words of Stephen nails, when he said, *Ye have always resisted the Holy Ghost?* Were not the words of Paul, when he said, *O senseless Galatians, who hath bewitched you?* and again when saying to the Corinthians, *For whereas there is among*

Eccles. 12, 11.

Matt. 3, 7.

Acts 7, 51.

Gal. 3, 1.

1 Cor. 3, 3.

Job 34, 2—8. *you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?* But it is necessary for us to look carefully: for when righteous preachers observe on the other hand any good deeds in those whom they reprove, with what just consideration do they proceed to use these same words of reproof. Behold! Paul, when instructing the Corinthians, and seeing them guilty of the sin of schism, began by saying, 1 Cor. 1, 4. 5. *I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God, which is given you in Christ Jesus, that in every thing ye are enriched by Him.* He praised them much in saying, that they were enriched in Christ in all things. And, lo! he again multiplies his soothing expressions, by saying, 1 Cor. 1, 5. 6. *In all utterance, and in all knowledge, as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.* He said, the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, as though they had carried out in their conduct, what they had learned from his teaching. And he subjoined just after, in summing up their praises, 1 Cor. 1, 7. *So that nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.* I pray thee, O Paul, inform us what art thou aiming at by these numerous words of favour? And, lo! it follows shortly after, 1 Cor. 1, 10. 11. *But I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you. For it hath been signified unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.* Of which contentions he afterwards added, saying, 1 Cor. 3, 3. *For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?* See with what praises he comes down to plain words of reproof; see with how gentle a hand of kindness he has opened the way for strict rebuke in the hearts of his hearers. For he first endeavoured to bind the arms of the proud by the bands of blandishments, in order to cut afterwards into the sore of their pride with the knife of correction. The Corinthians in truth possessed qualities which deserved praise, and such also as deserved reproof. The skilful physician then first caressed with praises the sound limbs about the wound, and afterwards pierced with a blow the putrid cavity of the wound. This rule of teaching has its weight with holy preachers on either side, so that

they favour and cherish what is right, and cut off with punishment what is wrong.

42. But frequently holy preachers too strike severely. But it is one thing when justice urges on, another when pride puffs up. The righteous, when severely correctiug, do not lose the grace of inward sweetness. For they frequently adopt the harshness of strict vigour, in order to keep in check the disorderly passions of the wicked, but they melt within with the fire of charity, and glow with affection towards those, against whom they are raging with severe reproof. And they humble themselves moreover beneath them in the secret of their heart within, while they seem to scorn and chasten them in the sight of men with the sharp stings of punishment. But they frequently both despise by not despising them, and despair by not despairing, in order that they may lead them to fear, and to shrink back the more speedily from sin, the more they point out to them that the pit of destruction is, as it were, nearer to them. But they frequently also point out their own faults to their disciples, in a kind of graceful temperament, in order that they may hear and learn, how strictly they censure themselves for their own conduct. But they regulate themselves with such judgment, as not to be severe within, even when they exalt themselves; nor again, when humbling themselves, outwardly remiss: for they keep up humility in their discipline, and discipline in their humility. Paul maintained discipliue, when saying to the Corinthians, *For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?* 1 Cor. 3, 3. But even when maintaining discipline he lost not his humility; because he began by deprecation, saying, *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye all speak the same thing*, and that *there be no schisms among you.* 1 Cor. 1, 10. Again he maintained humility, when, on speaking somewhat more at length than perhaps he had wished to the same Corinthians, he reproves himself, saying, *I am become a fool.* Yet in this humility he did not give up discipline, since he immediately added, *Ye have compelled me.* 2 Cor. 12, 11. He exhibited an instance of great humility, when he said to his disciples, *For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord; and ourselves your servants through Christ.* 2 Cor. 4, 5. But he lost not in this humility

Job 34, 9—11. 1 Cor. 4, 21. the justness of discipline, for he says to the same, offending, *What will ye? shall I come to you with a rod?* and so on. Holy preachers therefore well know how to regulate their skill in teaching by moderation on either side, and when they detect the faults of offenders, they have the art to reprove severely at one time, and humbly to deprecate at another. But when haughty men seek to imitate them, they adopt from them their sharp words of reproof, but know not how to adopt from them with sincerity the entreaties of humility. For they are better able to be terrific, than gentle; and they learn accordingly reasons for setting themselves up, though they neglect to learn humility. And since they do not know how to admonish offenders with gentleness, from their habit of being over severe in angry invective, they let themselves loose even against good doers. And this Eliu, as representing such persons, does not comfort Job, but reproves him, saying, *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning as water, who goeth with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* And because pride is ever a stranger to truth, he presently launches out even in falsehood, saying,

Ver. 9. *For he hath said, A man will not please God, even though he run with Him.*

xvii. 43. But that he never said so, every one acknowledges who reads the words of blessed Job. But yet what wonder, that he who speaks for the sole purpose of proudly setting himself off, invents something to find fault with in another person? For how can he adhere to truth in his words of reproof, whom pride of mind within removes far away from the same truth? It follows,

Ver. 10. *Therefore hearken unto me, Ye men of understanding.*

Behold again that, puffed up by pride and haughtiness, he seeks for those only who are able to follow him, by understanding him properly; and thus bursts out with what he was thinking of, saying,

impietas Ver. 10, 11. *Let unmercifulness be far from God, and iniquity from the Almighty: for the work of a man shall He render unto him, and will restore to them according to the ways of every man.*

44. He well said, that iniquity or unmercifulness is not in Almighty God. But that which he added is by no means always the case in this life, namely, that He renders to each man according to his work, and according to his own ways. For both many who commit unlawful and wicked deeds He prevents of His free grace, and converts to works of holiness: and some who are devoted to good deeds He reproves by means of the scourge, and so afflicts those who please Him, as though they were displeasing to Him. As Solomon bears witness, saying, *There are just men to whom many things happen, as though they had done the deeds of the wicked; and there are wicked, who are as secure as though they had the deeds of the just.* God doubtless so ordains it of His inestimable mercy, that both scourges should torture the just, lest their doings should elate them, and that the unjust should pass this life at least without punishment, because by their evil doings they are hastening onwards to those torments, which are without end. For that the just are sometimes scourged in no way according to their deserts, is shewn by this very history which we are considering. For the same blessed Job had not been scourged for any fault, who was praised by the attestation of the Judge Himself before the smarting of the scourge. Eliu therefore would speak more truly, if he had said, That there is not unmercifulness and iniquity in God, even when He seems not to render to men according to their own ways. For even that which we do not understand, is brought forth from the righteous balance of secret judgment. But because haughty preachers, when they scatter abroad many follies, also frequently utter many things that are true and solid, Eliu rightly subjoins,

Book XXIV. xviii. see Rev. 22, 12. 2 Cor. 5, 10. Eccles. 8, 14.

Ver. 12. *For truly God will not condemn without cause, nor will the Almighty subvert judgment.*

45. The Lord said to the devil, *Thou hast moved Me against him to afflict him without cause.* But Eliu says, *That the Lord will not condemn without cause.* A statement which is believed to be at variance with the words of Truth, unless weighed with careful consideration. For to condemn is one thing, to afflict another. He afflicts therefore in some respect without cause, but does not condemn without cause. Had He not afflicted Job in some respect

xix. Job 2, 3.

Job 34, 13. 14. without cause, since sin was not blotted out, but merit increased thereby? For He cannot condemn without reason, inasmuch as condemnation cannot take place partly for a certain purpose: since it punishes at the end all the ungodliness which any one has here committed. Nor does Almighty God subvert judgment: because, although our sufferings seem to be unjust, yet they are rightly inflicted in His secret judgment. It follows,

Ver. 13. *Whom else hath He appointed over the earth, or whom hath He placed over the world which He hath made?*

xx. 46. In order, namely, that thou mayest understand, No one. For He governs indeed by Himself the world which He created by Himself: nor does He need the aid of others in governing, Who needed it not for creating. But these points are brought together, in order that he might plainly point out, that if Almighty God does not neglect to govern by Himself the world which He created, He most certainly governs aright that which He created aright; that He does not order in unmercifulness that which He fashioned in mercy; and that He Who provided for their being before they were made, does not forsake them after their creation. Because then He is present to rule, Who was the First Cause at their creation, He therefore does not omit to take care of us. Whence also he fitly subjoins,

Ver. 14. *If he hath directed his heart towards Him, He will gather to Himself his spirit, and his breath.*

xxi. 47. The heart is crooked, when it seeks for things below. It is made straight when it is raised to things above. If a man therefore direct his heart to the Lord, the Lord draws to Himself his spirit and his breath. He uses, namely, spirit for inward thoughts, but breath, which is drawn through the body, for outward actions. For God, then, to draw the spirit and breath of man to Himself, is for Him so to change us both within and without, to turn towards Him in our desires, that nothing outward may any longer please the mind, and that the flesh (even if it wishes it) may not endeavour to attain any inferior object; but that the whole man may have its inward desires kindled towards Him from Whom it springs, and may bind itself closer to Him without, by self-control. Whence also he fitly subjoins,

Ver. 15. *All flesh shall fail together, and man shall return to ashes.*

48. For all flesh fails together, when it is no longer a slave to its own emotions; because the spirit presiding therein restrains all its waverings, and destroys as it were with the sword of Its severity all evil which lived therein. Jeremiah had, in truth, slain himself with this sword of discipline, when he said, *After Thou hadst converted me, I did penance, and after Thou hadst shewed to me, I smote my thigh.* For what is understood by the thigh, but carnal pleasure? And what his saying, *After Thou hadst shewed unto me, I smote my thigh*, except that after he spiritually beheld heavenly things, he extinguished every infirm carnal desire which used to live in him: that as heavenly objects opened upon him, he might feel less pleasure in those inferior things which he had possessed? For the more a man begins to live to things above, does he begin to die to things below. For as far as concerns the love of carnal doings, the whole flesh of Paul had perished together, when he said, *I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me.* xxiii. Jer. 31, 19. Gal. 2, 20.

49. Eliu also properly subjoined in this place, *And man shall return to ashes.* For every one who is involved in sin, forgets his mortal condition, and while he is still puffed up with pride, remembers not that he is earth. But when, after the grace of his conversion, he is touched with the spirit of humility, what does he call to mind that he is, but ashes? David had already returned to ashes, when he said, *Remember, Lord, that we are dust.* And Abraham had returned to ashes, saying, *I will speak to my Lord, though I am dust and ashes.* And though death had not yet dissolved their living flesh unto earth, yet in their own opinion they were that, which they foresaw without doubt they were about to be. Hence it is said in another place, *Thou wilt take away their breath, and they will fail, and will return to their dust.* But what is meant by their breath, but the breath of pride? Let their breath then be taken away, that they may fail; that is, feel themselves to be nothing in themselves, when the breath of pride is withdrawn. And let them return to dust, that is, let them be humbled by their infirm condition. It is on account of this very dust, to the recollection Ps. 103, 14. Gen. 18, 27. Ps. 104, 29.

Job 34, 16. Wisd. 3, 7. of which those are recalled who consider themselves, that it is said by Wisdom, *The righteous shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds.* For holy men while they mix with sinners, kindle them by the fire of their example, and reduce to ashes all their brilliancy. For consumed by the flame of holiness, they discern themselves, on looking at the infirmity of their condition, to be nought but ashes. So that when loosened from the hardness of their pride they may use the words before quoted, *Remember, O Lord, that we are dust.* It is well said then that when God draws the breath of a man to Himself, all flesh will fail together, and man will return to ashes. These words of Elihu are true and important. But he betrays in the words which follow that he was soon wickedly puffed up by that which he thought rightly, saying,

Ver. 16. *If then thou hast understanding, hear what is said, and listen to the voice of my words.*

xxiii. 50. All haughty men have this peculiarity, that when they perchance entertain any acute sentiment, they soon launch out in consequence into the sin of pride, that they despise the opinion of every one else in comparison with their own, and prefer themselves in their own judgment to the merits of others. It is the fate of these wretched men, to be more in the dark the more they see; for while they look at subtleties, they overlook themselves; and the more acutely they perceive their wisdom, the more fatally do they fall through pride. But they would look into subtleties to some use, if in what they bring forward they were to see themselves. For Elihu said above, *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me; speak, for I wish thee to appear just.* But now he says, *If thou hast understanding, hear what is said.* See how his pride gradually advances in increase of expression. He doubted above whether blessed Job could bring forward what was just. He now makes it a question if he can even hear what is said. He said there, *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me.* As though he were to say, Say something, if at least thou wilt be able to speak worthily. But here he says, *If thou hast understanding, hear what is said.* As though he said plainly, Hear me, if thou wilt be able to hear worthily. These are the daily declensions which take

Job 33, 32.

place in the heart of the wicked, by which they are unceasingly sinking to worse; because while they carelessly neglect smaller faults, they break out wickedly into greater. It had already resulted from his pride that he doubted whether blessed Job could say what was just. But through neglecting to watch this fault in himself, he arrived at greater wickedness: so as not only to doubt that he could possibly say what was just, but even to despair of his understanding himself when speaking what was just. Wherefore the sin of pride must be cut up at once by the very roots, that when it springs up secretly it may be cut off vigilantly, so that it may not gain vigour by growth, or strength by habit. For it is a hard matter for a man to detect in himself inveterate pride, because in truth, the more we suffer under this sin, the less do we see of it. For pride is generated in the mind exactly as darkness in the eyes. For the wider it spreads itself, the more does it contract the light. Pride then grows up gradually in the heart, and when it has extended itself wider and wider, it closes entirely the sight of the mind which suffers from it, so that the captive mind can both suffer from the haughtiness of pride, and yet be unable to behold that under which it suffers. But because haughty men, as we have said, sometimes hold sound views in an unsound way, and know how to invent good arguments, but scorn to state them aright; Elihu, after the haughty pride with which he had said, *If thou hast understanding, hear what is said*, subjoins, saying, Book XXIV.

Ver. 17. *Can he be healed that loveth not judgment? How dost thou so much condemn him that is just?*

51. He uttered a proper sentiment, but it ought not to have been uttered to blessed Job. For in every thing which is said we must by all means consider, what is said, to whom it is said, where it is said, how it is said. But Elihu considered only what he was saying, but did not consider to whom he was saying it. For blessed Job loved judgment, since he knew how to weigh his causes carefully with the Lord. Nor had he condemned Him that is just: but humbly enquired, when involved in grief, why he had been smitten when without sin. He loves judgment, whoever examines his own ways minutely, and enters into the secret xxiv.

Job 34, 18. chambers of his heart, and there considers what the Lord bestows on him, and what he owes to the Lord. But how had blessed Job not acted thus, who used to offer such frequent sacrifices in expiation for his sons, even on account of their thoughts? Because then Eliu said, that he that loveth not judgment cannot be healed, accusing blessed Job of not loving judgment, and of having condemned Him who is just, he immediately subjoins the righteousness of that same righteous One, that is, the Lord, saying,

Ver. 18. *Who saith to a king, Apostate: who calleth leaders ungodly.*

xxv. 52. We know often that most of those who rule exact an inordinate degree of dread from their subjects, and that they wish them to venerate them not so much for the Lord's sake, as in the Lord's place. For they exalt themselves with pride of heart within, and despise all under them in comparison with themselves, nor do they advise them with condescension, but oppress them with authority: because, in truth, they set themselves up with lofty thoughts, and do not acknowledge themselves to be equal with those over whom they happen to rule. Against this pride it is said in the Book Ecclesiasticus, Eccles. 32, 1. *Have they appointed thee a ruler? Be not lifted up, but be among them as one of them.* This pride the Lord also Ez. 34, 4. reproving by the Prophet in shepherds, saith, *But ye ruled over them with austerity and with power.* For the good advice which they offer to their subjects, they bring out as ordering, rather than as advising with them: for the very reason, that to say any thing to them as if they were on equal terms, they consider a degradation. For they rejoice in their singular preeminence, and not in the equality of their creation. But because the Lord carefully considers those swelling hearts of rulers, it is well said against them, *Who saith to a king, Apostate.* For every haughty ruler falls into the sin of apostasy, as often as, through pleasure at his ruling over men, he rejoices in his peculiar distinction. For he considers not under Whom he himself is, and exults over his equals, for that he is as it were not their equal. But whence is it that this root of evil springs up in the heart of rulers, unless it be in imitation of him, who, having scorned Is. 14, 14. the society of angels, said, *I will ascend above the height of*

the clouds, and will be like the Most High? Since then every ruler, as often as he prides himself on ruling over others, is cut off, by falling into pride, from dependence on the Chief Ruler of all: and, because when he despises his equals who are subject to him, he does not acknowledge the supreme dominion of Him under Whom all are equal; it is rightly said, *Who saith to a king, Apostate.*

53. But since by domineering over others they lead their subjects to impiety by the example of their pride, it is fitly subjoined, *Who calleth leaders ungodly.* For they would lead them into the way of piety, if they did but present a pattern of humility to the eyes of their subjects. But he is an ungodly *leader*, who diverges from the path of truth, and who, when falling headlong himself, invites his followers to the precipice. He is an ungodly *leader* who points out the way of error by setting examples of pride. Paul was afraid of being an ungodly *leader*, when he brought down the loftiness of his power, saying, *Not seeking glory of men, neither* 1 Thess. 2, 6. *of you nor yet of others, when we might have been a burden as the Apostles of Christ, but we became as children in the midst of you.* He had become as a child in the midst of them, because he was afraid lest he should set example of pride, if he claimed, among his disciples, the honour due to his high station. He was afraid, in truth, lest if he were to seek for himself the power of pastoral authority, the flock committed to him should follow him along precipitous places, and lest he, who had undertaken an office of piety, should be leading to ungodliness those who followed him.

54. It is therefore necessary for a person in high place to take special care what example he sets his subjects, and to know that he is living for all those, over whom he knows he is placed. He should be especially watchful not to pride himself on his being set above others, lest he should exact too immoderately the privileges of rightful authority, lest the rule of discipline should be converted into the severity of pride, and lest by the power he possessed of restraining his subjects from wickedness, he should pervert the more the hearts of those who behold him; and lest (as was before observed) he should become a leader of impiety by means of his pious office. A man, however, ought not to undertake to guide

Job 34, 18. others, who does not know how to lead them in holy living; lest he, who has been appointed to reprove others' faults, shall himself commit the sin which it was his duty to cut off. Let rulers therefore take special care to live for themselves and those under them: to hide in the bosom of their mind the good which they do, and yet furnish thereby an example of good behaviour for the benefit of those who follow them; to correct the faults of their subjects by doing judgment, and yet not pride themselves at the severity of this same punishment; to be content with slightly reproving certain faults, and yet not to relax the bonds of discipline by this lenity; to overlook, and bear with other evils, and yet not to suffer them to make head by their overlooking them. These things are laborious, and, unless Divine grace support, hard to keep. But it is rightly said by the Book of Wisdom of the coming

Wisd. 6, 5. of the strict Judge, *Horribly and speedily will He appear, for a very sharp judgment shall be to them who are in high places.* Since therefore people too commonly launch out into pride from the power of rule, and pride itself is counted as an impiety by the strict Judge, it is well said by Eliu of the Lord, *Who calleth leaders ungodly.* For when they are proud of their authority, they lead by their example those under them to impiety.

55. A person then who is appointed to rule over men, must be especially careful, within the secret chambers of his mind, to preside in the seat of humility. And when others stand before him without, as he gives his sentence, he should with watchful eye behold Him, before Whom he is hereafter to stand to be judged for these very matters: that so he may behold Him with greater confidence, when he has seen Him, the more anxiously he trembles now before Him, Whom he does not behold. Let him consider then, that he who is hardly able perhaps to satisfy so strict a Judge for his own soul, has, from his ruling over so many subjects, so many souls (so to speak) singly to answer for to Him, at the time for rendering his account. And if this thought continually penetrates the mind, it crushes all the swelling of pride. And a careful ruler will be called neither an apostate king, nor an ungodly ruler, the more anxiously he regards the power he has received not as

an honour, but as a burden. For he that is well pleased at being a judge now, feels no pleasure at beholding the Judge then. For the faults which are committed from the desire of obtaining power, cannot be numbered. But authority is then alone properly exercised, when it is held not in love of it, but in fear. And in order that it may be properly administered, necessity, and not our own desire, should, in the first place, impose it on us. But it neither ought to be abandoned through fear when once undertaken, nor, again, embraced as an object of desire; for fear a person should, as if by reason of humility, be guilty of greater pride, in contemning and shrinking from the course of the Divine dispensation: or should cast off the yoke of his Heavenly Ruler, the more his own private authority over others gives him pleasure. When power then is possessed it must not be greedily loved, but patiently endured; in order that then, at the judgment, it may be a light burden to our comfort, as we know it now for a service which is heavy to be borne.

Book XXIV. see Rev. 6, 15.

BOOK XXV.

In explanation of the thirty-fourth chapter from the nineteenth to the thirtieth verse, the punishments of the reprobate, and the secret judgments of God are discussed.

Job 34, 19. 1. The very mode of man's creation shews, how far he surpasses all things beside. For the reason which has been conferred on man proclaims how far a rational nature surpasses all things which are deficient in either life, or sense, or reason. And yet, because we close our eyes to inward and invisible objects, and feast them on those which are seen, we most commonly esteem a man, not for what he is in himself, but from what is accidental to him. And since we do not look at what a man is in himself, but what he can do, in our acceptance of persons we are influenced, not by the persons themselves, but by what accidentally belongs to them. And thus it comes to pass, that even that person is inwardly despised by us, who is outwardly held in honour; for whilst he is honoured for that which is about him, he is, from his own doings, placed low in our judgment. But Almighty God examines the conduct of men, solely on the nature of their deserts, and frequently inflicts severer punishment, from the very fact, that He has here given greater opportunities of serving Him. As the Truth Itself bears witness, saying, *To whom much is given, of him much will be required.* Whence it is now well said by Eliu, (ver. 19.) *Who accepteth not the person of princes, and hath not regarded a tyrant, when disputing against the poor.*

Luke 12, 48.

ii. 2. But by prince, or tyrant, may be understood every proud person; but the humble may be designated by the poor. He does not regard then a tyrant, when disputing against the poor, because He declares that He knows not, in the judgment, any proud men who now oppress the life of

the humble, saying, *I know you not, whence ye are.* And because He thus destroys him, when He wills, by His power, as He created him, when He willed, by His power, it is fitly added in argument, Book XXV. Luke13, 25.

For they are all the work of His hands.

And it is immediately added,

Ver 20. *Suddenly shall they die, and the people shall bow down at midnight, and pass away.*

iii. 3. However long it be before the ungodly are taken out of this life, they are taken away suddenly, and at an instant, since they know not how to foresee their end by thinking on it. That is sudden to any one, which he has not been able to think of beforehand. That rich man was taken away suddenly, who left the barns which he was preparing, and found the place of hell, which he was not looking for. He was employing his soul in thinking in one direction, he parted with it in another by his sentence. He fixed his thoughts on one object when alive, he experienced another when he was dying. For he left those temporal things, which he had long engaged in, and he found eternal things which he did not look for. Whence, in consequence of this his blind ignorance, it is well said to him by the Divine sentence, *This night do they require thy soul of thee.* For that soul was taken away by night, which was lost in blindness of heart. That was taken away by night, which refused to enjoy the light of consideration, in order to foresee what it would suffer. Whence the Apostle Paul rightly says to his disciples who are thinking on future things, *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and children of day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness.* For the day of death seizes as a thief in the night, when it casts out the souls of foolish men, which do not look onward to the future. Whence it is here also fitly subjoined, *And the people shall bow down at midnight, and pass away.* They bow down and pass away at midnight, who are brought low and swept away by the darkness of their negligence. They will then be bowed down by the sentence of the Judge, who now refuse to bend with humility of heart. But the Elect bow themselves of their own accord in humility, that they may not be bowed

Luke12, 20.

1 Thess. 5, 4. 5.

Job 34, 20. down against their will in death. Whence is it said to Holy Church, of the converted children of her persecutors, Is. 60, 14. *The sons of them who humbled thee, shall come bending to thee.*

4. And he says properly of dying peoples, not that "they will pass along," but *pass away*, because simply by living in the world we are daily coming to an end, and we pass along this present life, as though wearing a track in a road. But that men live subject to death, is a kind of journeying deathwards. And every day we pass of our life, we are approaching as it were on our journey by as many steps to the appointed spot. But the very increase of our years, is a wearing them away; for the length of our life begins to be not so much as it was at first. But the first man was so fashioned, that, as time passed on, he remained stationary, so as not to journey on together with it. For he remained still, as the moments hasted away; since he did not approach to the end of his life, through the increase of his days. And he stood the firmer, the closer he clung to Him who is ever stationary. But after he touched the forbidden thing, having offended his Creator, he began to pass onward together with time. Having lost, namely, the stability of an immortal condition, the stream of mortal being engulphed him. And, while borne along by youth to age, and by age to death, he learned, as he journeyed on, what he was when he remained stationary. And because we are sprung from his stock, we retain, like shoots, the bitterness of our root. For because we derive our origin from him, we inherit his course of life, at our birth, so that every moment of every day that we live, we are constantly passing away from life, and the length of our life decreases by the very means by which it is believed to increase. Since then we are daily proceeding, as our years increase, to the issue of death, it is well said of the dying, not that they pass along, but pass away. For they pass along, even while they live, but pass away, as they die. It follows,

And they will take away the violent without hand.

iv. 5. Thou understandest, 'The divine judgments.' But they will take him away without hand, who was violent with his hand. They will take him away without hand, because,

namely, he is snatched away, by the violence of a sudden death, invisibly, who used visibly to spoil others. He beheld those whom he spoiled, but beholds not him who hurries him away in death. The violent therefore is taken away without hand, because he both beholds not his spoiler, and yet is hurried along. And there follows him a severer sentence, the longer great forbearance is extended[1] to him when sinning: because the severity of God punishes a sinner the more strictly, the longer it has borne with him. But it is frequently the case, that while the Divine mercy is waiting for sinners, they plunge into greater blindness of heart. Whence it is written, *Knowest thou not that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?* Observe, then, that while the man of violence is spoiling those whom he is able, is oppressing the weak, and indulging a long time all his sinful desires; because he is not smitten at once, and because his punishment is deferred to the end, his most wicked conduct is believed not to be observed by God. After then he had spoken of his death, he immediately rightly added concerning the Lord,

[1] al. 'was first granted.'

Rom. 2, 4. 5.

Ver. 21. *For His eyes are over the ways of men, and He considers all their steps.*

6. For He was then believed not to observe them, while this man of violence was committing, unpunished, all the wickedness he could. God was supposed not to behold the deeds of the ungodly, because He was delaying to condemn them justly; and His great forbearance was regarded as a kind of carelessness. The wicked also himself believed that he was not observed by God in the commission of sin, as often as he sinned without being punished. To whom it is said by a certain wise man, *Say not, I have sinned, and what harm hath happened to me?* He does not wish to correct the wickedness, for which he has not suffered the punishment it deserved: and the more mercifully he is spared, the more sinfully is he urged on to wickedness: and, despising the long-suffering of the Divine forbearance, he has added to his faults, from the very circumstance that should have led him

v.

Eccles. 5, 4.

Job 34, 21. to correct them. As is said by this very Job, *God gave him a place for repentance, but he misuses it in his pride.* Job 24, 23. Frequently, also, because he does not suffer immediately the punishment he deserves, he considers that his conduct is not displeasing to God. Let him go then now, and launch forth presumptuously into every kind of blasphemy. Let him take his fill of his sinful pleasures; let him spoil others' goods, and satiate himself with the oppression of the innocent. And, because he is not yet smitten, let him consider that his ways are not observed by God, or, what is worse, that they are approved of by Him. There will fall on him, full surely, there will fall on him, a sudden and everlasting blow. And he will then acknowledge, that every thing is observed by God, when he sees himself condemned, by an unexpected death, in retribution for all his guilt. He will then open, in his torment, the eyes which he long kept closed in sin. He will then perceive, that the righteous Judge has observed every thing, when he is now unable, by perceiving it, to escape the due deserts of his sins. The ungodly, then, who is long spared, is swept away suddenly, because *the eyes of the Lord are over all the ways of men, and He considereth all their steps.* As though he were to say, Because He does not at last leave those sins unpunished, which He long looks on with forbearance. For, behold! He has suddenly swept away the violent man, and his sins which He endured with patience, He has cut off with punishment. Let no one say then, when he beholds any ungodly man heaping up sin without restraint, that God does not notice the conduct of men. For he who is long tolerated, is swept away suddenly.

7. But he calls the steps of men, either our separate actions on which we are engaged, or the alternating motives of our inmost thoughts, by which, as if by steps, we either depart far from the Lord, or approach near to Him by holiness. For the mind approaches by so many steps nearer to God, as it makes progress in so many holy emotions. And, again, it departs so many steps further from Him, as it becomes depraved by so many evil thoughts. Whence it is frequently the case that, though the emotion of the mind does not come forth in action, yet the sin is already perfected,

by reason of the guilt itself of the thought. As it is written, *Hand in hand, the wicked shall not be innocent.* For hand is wont to be joined with hand, when it rests at ease, and no laborious employment exercises it. *Hand* therefore *in hand, the wicked shall not be innocent.* As though he were saying, Even when the hand rests from sinful deeds, yet the wicked, by reason of his thoughts, is not innocent. Because then we know that not merely our actions, but even our thoughts, are strictly weighed, what will befal us for our walking in wicked action, if God judges so minutely the steps of the heart? Behold, no man witnesses the secret courses of our mind, and yet, in the sight of God, we are making as many steps, as many affections as we put in motion. We fall before Him, as often as we stumble away from the straight path by the foot of unstable thought. For unless this frequent stumbling of our minds increased in His sight, He would not in truth exclaim by the Prophet, *Put away the evil of your thoughts from before Mine eyes.* But speaking thus, He witnesses that He cannot endure, as it were, the intensity of our secret wickedness. But it cannot be hidden from Him, because, namely, every unlawful thought which is conceived in secret by us, is thrust offensively before His sight. *For*, as it is written, *all things are naked and open to His eyes.* Whence it is here also properly subjoined,

Book XXV. Prov. 11, 21. Is. 1, 16. Heb. 4, 13.

Ver. 22. *There is no darkness, and there is no shadow of death, where they who work iniquity may be hid.*

8. What did he intend to designate by darkness but ignorance, and what by the shadow of death, except oblivion? For it is said of the ignorance of certain persons, *Having their mind obscured with darkness.* And it is written again of the oblivion which comes on us at death, *In that day all their thoughts shall perish.* Since then whatever is thought of during life is utterly consigned to oblivion by death, oblivion is a kind of shadow of death. For as intervening death puts an end to the doings of life, so does intervening forgetfulness destroy that which existed in the memory. It is rightly, therefore, called its shadow, inasmuch as it is modelled upon it, as it were, while it imitates its power in lulling the senses to rest. But, since God is neither unacquainted with men's evil thoughts, nor forgetful of their

vi. Eph. 4, 18. Ps. 146, 4.

Job 34, 22. evil deeds, (except indeed they are blotted out of His sight by penitence,) it is appropriately observed, *There is no darkness, and there is no shadow of death, where they who work iniquity may be hid.* As though he were to say, No one is hidden from His judgment, for this reason, that it is impossible for Him either not to behold what we do, or to forget what He beholds.

9. Although 'darkness,' or 'the shadow of death,' can be understood likewise in another sense. For every change is a kind of resemblance of death. For that which changes any thing, cuts it off, as it were, from what it was before: that so it ceases to be what it was, and begins to be what it was not. Because then the true Light, our Creator, I mean, is obscured by no vicissitude of change, and overshadowed by no defects in His own nature; but it is His nature to shine forth unchangeably, darkness and the shadow of death are said not to exist in Him. Wherefore it is written elsewhere, *With Whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.* And hence again, Paul the Apostle says, *Who only hath immortality, and dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.* But, since we all know that both the soul of man and angelic spirits were created immortal, why is God alone said by the Apostle to have immortality, unless it be that God alone truly dies not, since He alone is never changed?

James 1, 17.

1 Tim. 6, 16.

10. For the soul of man would not fall, if it had not been changeable. And, banished also from the joys of Paradise, if it were not capable of change, it would never return to life. But, in endeavouring to return to life, it is compelled to bear with its defects, from its alternation and change. Because then it was fashioned out of nothing, it is of itself ever sinking beneath itself, unless kept up by the hand of its Maker to a condition of holy desire. Since then it is a creature, it has a downward tendency. For it considers, that of its own strength, it is able only to fall headlong; but it holds firmly to its Creator, with the hand of love, lest it should fall, until it passes over to unchangeableness, and lives really immortally, because unchangeably.

11. The Angelic spirits also were made changeable by nature, so as to fall of their own accord, or to stand from

their own will. But, because they humbly chose to cling to Him, by Whom they were created, they overcame the changeableness which was in them, by remaining immutably firm, so that they deservedly rose above the liability to change, to which they would have been subject in the order of their nature. Since then it is the property of the Divine Nature alone, not to suffer the shades of ignorance and change, let it be justly said, *There is no darkness, and there is no shadow of death, where they, who work iniquity, may be hid.* For the more unchangeably that eternal light shines, which is God Himself, the more piercingly does It see, and It is neither ignorant of what is hid, since It penetrates all things, nor does It forget the things It has penetrated, because It lasts on without change. And consequently, as often as we conceive in our mind any unworthy thought, so often do we sin in the light. Because It is present to us though not present to It; and when we walk wickedly we offend against It, from which we are deservedly far away. But, when we believe that we are not seen, we keep our eyes closed in the sun light: that is to say, we conceal Him from ourselves, not ourselves from Him. Let us then, now while we are able, blot out our evil thoughts, and more evil deeds, from the sight of the eternal Judge. Let us recal to the eyes of our heart whatever evil we have committed through the sin of presumption. Let not our weakness flatter itself, and handle itself delicately in those sins, which it calls to mind. But the more it is conscious to itself of evil, let it be the more kindly severe against itself. Let it set before itself the future judgment, and whatever sins it is conscious must be severely smitten by the sentence of the Judge, let it mercifully smite in itself by the penitence of conversion. Whence, after the punishment of this man of violence has been described, it fitly follows,

Job 34, 23. See note at the end of this book.

Ver. 23. *For it is no longer in the power of man to come near to God for judgment.*

12. This verse requires the greater discussion, the more painful is that which it speaks of, if it is neglected. Here doubtless that judgment is not designated which punishes by eternal retribution, but that which, conceived by the mind, vii.

Job 34, 23. cleanses through our conversation[1]. For whoever is afraid of being condemned by the first of these does not desire to approach near it. By its being said then, *For it is no longer in the power of man to come near to God for judgment*, it is pointed out at once that there is a kind of judgment, which is at last desired even by the damned and reprobate. And what is that, but this of which Paul the Apostle speaks, *For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged?* and of which it is said by the Prophet, *There is no judgment in their goings*, and of which David says, *The honour of a king loveth judgment*, namely, that he who now knows God by Faith, should carefully judge what he owes Him in his works. Whence it is written again, *Be judged before the Lord, and wait for Him.* He in truth is judged before the Lord, who beholds the Lord in his heart, and examines into his conduct with anxious enquiry, beneath His presence. For a man waits for Him the more confidently, the more he daily examines his life with suspicion. For he, who comes to His final judgment, is no longer judged before Him, but by Him. Of this judgment also the Lord speaks by the Prophet to the forgetful soul, *Put Me in remembrance, that we may plead together; tell me, if thou hast any thing, that thou mayest be justified.*

[1] al. 'conversion.'

1 Cor. 11, 31.

Is. 59, 8.

Ps. 99, 4.

Job 35, 14.

Is. 43, 26.

13. For the mind of every one ought anxiously to enquire into its pleas before God, and the pleas of God against itself. It should weigh carefully either what good things it has received from Him, or what an ill return it has made for His goodness by wicked living. And this the Elect never cease to do day by day. Whence Solomon well says, *The thoughts of the righteous are judgments.* For they, approach the secret chambers of the Judge, in the recesses of their own heart; they consider how sharply He smites at last, Who long patiently bears with them. They are afraid for the sins which they remember they have committed; and they punish by their tears the faults which they know they have perpetrated. They dread the searching judgments of God, even in those sins, which they perchance cannot discover in themselves. For they see that that is observed by Divine Power, which they, through human weakness, do not see in themselves. They behold the severe Judge, Who strikes a heavier blow

Prov. 12, 5.

the slower He is in coming. They contemplate also the assembly of the holy Fathers seated with Him in judgment, and blame themselves for having slighted either their words or their examples. And, in this secret chamber of inward judgment, constrained by the sentence of their own conscience, they chasten with penitence, that which they have committed through pride. For they there count over whatever comes against, and assails them. There do they crowd before their eyes every thing they should weep for. There do they behold whatever can be searched out by the wrath of the severe Judge. There do they suffer as many punishments as they are afraid of suffering. And, in the sentence thus conceived in the mind there is present every agency which is needed for the fuller punishment of those convicted by it. For the conscience accuses, reason judges, fear binds, and pain tortures. And this judgment punishes the more certainly, the more inward is its rage; because it does not come to us from any thing without. For when any one has begun to enter on this business of examination against himself, he is himself the prosecutor who arraigns, he is himself the accused who is arraigned. He hates himself, as he remembers himself to have been: and in the person of his present self persecutes his former self. And a contest is raised by a man in his mind against himself, bringing forth peace with God. This struggle of the heart the Lord required, when He said, by the Prophet, *I attended and hearkened: no man speaketh what is good, there is no one that doth penance for his sin, saying, What have I done?* He was appeased by this struggle of the heart, when He spake to His Prophet, of King Ahab, reproving himself, saying, *Hast thou seen Ahab humbled before Me? therefore because he hath humbled himself for My sake, I will not bring the evil in his days.*

Book XXV. 2 Cor. 6, 2.

Jer. 8, 6.

1 Kings 21, 29.

14. Since then it is now in our power to undergo an inward judgment of our mind against ourselves, let us examine and accuse our own selves, and torture our former selves by penitence. Let us not cease to judge ourselves, while it is in our power. Let us carefully attend to what is said, *For it is no longer in the power of man to come near to God for judgment.* For it is a property of reprobates to

Job 34, 23. be ever doing wrong, and never to repent of what they have done. For they pass over, with blinded mind, every thing that they do, and do not acknowledge what they have done, except when they have been punished. But it is the custom of the Elect, on the other hand, to examine daily into their conduct from the very first springs of their thoughts, and to drain to the bottom, whatever impurity flows forth from thence. For as we do not notice how our limbs grow, our body increases, our appearance changes, our hair turns from black to white, (for all these things take place in us, without our knowing it,) in like manner is our mind changed from itself, by the very habit of anxiety every moment of our life; and we do not perceive it, unless we sit down to carefully watch our inmost condition, and weigh our advances and failures day by day. For in this life, to stand still, is, in itself, to go back, as it were, to our old state, and when the mind is left undisturbed, it is overpowered by an old age, as it were, of torpor: because by neglecting itself, and by losing insensibly its proper strength, it wastes away, unknown to itself, from the appearance of its former power. Whence it is said by the Prophet, under the character of Ephraim,

Hos.7,9. *Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knew it not, but even gray hairs are sprinkled on him, and he himself was ignorant of it.* But when the mind enquires into itself, and examines itself carefully with penitence, it is renewed from this its old nature, by being bathed with tears, and kindled with grief; and, though it had been well nigh frozen with the chill of age, it glows afresh by a supply of the zeal of inward love. Whence the Apostle Paul warns his disciples, who were growing old by contact with this mortal life, saying,

Eph. 4, 23. *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*

15. But both the examples of the Fathers, and the precepts of holy Scripture, assist us much in acting thus. For if we look at the doings of the Saints, and lend an ear to the Divine commands, the sight of the one and the hearing of the other inflames us. And our heart is not benumbed with torpor, when it is urged on by imitation of them. Whence

Lev. 6, 12. it is well said to Moses; *The fire on the altar shall always burn, which the priest shall feed, putting wood on it every day in the morning.* For the altar of God is our heart, in

which the fire is ordered always to burn: because it is necessary that the flame of love should constantly ascend therefrom to God. And the priest should put wood thereon every day, lest it should go out. For every one who is endowed with faith in Christ, is made specially a member of the Great High Priest, as Peter the Apostle says to all the faithful, *But ye are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.* And as the Apostle John says, *Thou hast made us a kingdom and priests to our God.* The Priest therefore feeding the fire on the altar, must place fuel on it every day; that is, every faithful person must never cease to collect together in his heart as well the examples of those who have gone before, as also the testimonies of Holy Scripture, that the flame of love may not be extinguished within it. For to make use of, either the examples of the Fathers, or the precepts of the Lord, in exciting our love, is, as it were, to supply fuel to the fire. For since our new life within daily grows old, by its very converse with this world, fire must be fed by a supply of wood, so that while it wastes itself away by the habits of our own condition, it may revive by means of the examples and testimonies of the Fathers. And it is there rightly ordered, that wood should be thrown on every day in the morning. For these things are not done, unless when the night of blindness is extinguished. Or certainly, because the morning is the first part of the day, every one of the faithful must put aside the thoughts of this life, and consider in the first place, that he must enkindle by every means in his power, that zeal which is even now as it were failing within him. For this fire on the altar of the Lord, that is, on our heart, is speedily extinguished, if it is not carefully renewed by an application of the examples of the Fathers, and the testimonies of the Lord.

Book XXV.

1 Pet. 2, 9. Rev. 1, 6.

16. But it is rightly subjoined in this place, *And when the burnt offering is placed upon it he shall burn the fat of the peace offerings.* For whoever kindles within himself this fire of love, places himself upon it as a burnt offering, because he burns out every fault, which wickedly lived within him. For when he examines the secrets of his own thoughts, and sacrifices his wicked life, by the sword of conversion, he has placed himself on the altar of

Lev. 6, 12.

Job 34, 23. his own heart, and kindled himself with the fire of love. And the fat of the peace offerings smells sweetly from this victim: because the inward fatness of new love, making peace between ourselves and God, emits from us the sweetest odour. But since this self-same love continues inextinguishable in the heart of the Elect, it is there fitly subjoined, *This is that perpetual fire, which shall never go out on the altar.* This fire in truth will never go out on the altar, because the glow of love increases in their minds even after this life. For it is the effect of eternal contemplation, that Almighty God is loved the more deeply, the more He is seen.

Lev. 6, 13.

17. But that we are delivered from the depths of this life, when aided by the Divine warning, and the examples of those who have gone before, is also well signified by Jeremiah the Prophet being lowered into a well; for ropes and old rags are let down, in order to raise him out of it. For what is typified by the ropes but the precepts of the Lord? For since they both bind us fast, and snatch us away when involved in evil doings, they tie, as it were, and draw us, they confine and raise us up. But for fear he should be cut, when bound, and dragged by the ropes, old rags are at the same time lowered down: because the examples of the old fathers strengthen, that the Divine commands may not alarm us. And, by comparing ourselves with them, we presume that we are able to do that, which we shrink from, through our own weakness. If then we are anxious to be raised from the depth, let us be fastened with ropes, that is, let us be bound by the precepts of the Lord. But let old rags also be placed between, for the ropes to be held better by their means: that is, let us be supported by the examples of those of old times, that the subtle precepts may not, as they raise up, wound us who are infirm and timid. The Apostle Paul used to apply, as it were, some old rags, when he adapted the examples of the ancients to his spiritual precepts, in order to raise up his disciples, saying, *The righteous had trial of mockings and scourgings, moreover also of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword.* And shortly after, *Having therefore so great a cloud of witnesses*

Jer. 38, 11.

Heb. 11, 36. 37.

Heb. 12, 1.

placed over us, laying aside every weight, and the sin which surrounds us, let us run with patience to the contest set before us; and again, *Remember those who are placed over you, who have spoken to you the word of God, whose faith imitate, looking to the end of their conversation.* He had, namely, in a former passage, lowered ropes, as it were, while announcing spiritual precepts. But afterwards he applied old rags, as it were, when mentioning the examples of ancestors. Book XXV. Heb. 13, 7.

18. Roused then by the voices of so many precepts, and aided by the comparison of so many examples, let us turn back to our hearts, and examine carefully all our doings. And let us blame whatever within us offends against the will of Divine rectitude, in order that this very accusation may excuse us with our strict Judge. For we are the more quickly acquitted in this judgment of our conscience, the more strictly we regard ourselves as guilty. And we must not omit the opportunities which are afforded us for this purpose, because, after the season of this life, there is no time for so doing. For it is not, indeed, said without reason, *For it is no longer in the power of man to come near to God for judgment.* For we are reminded of what we cannot do then, in order that we may not neglect, now, what we can do. But behold, engagements occupy our minds, and, from their constant contact with us, turn away the eye of our mind from self consideration. For our mind is distracted by those visible things, which it beholds, and when it is employed outwardly, it forgets what is going on in itself within. But the Divine voice pierces it with its terrible sentences, like so many nails, to keep it vigilant; that man may, at least when startled with fear, tremble at the secret judgments hanging over him, which he pretends not to see, when overwhelmed by torpor. For, as we said above, the mind is weighed down, by being fatally accustomed to the habits of the old life, and is lulled as in sleep on these outward objects which it beholds; and after having once wasted its strength in seeking after visible things without, it has lost all its power for contemplating invisible things within. Whence it is now necessary that the mind which is detached by visible objects, should be smitten with invisible judgments, and that, since it has laid

Job 34, 24. itself low by its evil indulgence in these outward objects, it should seek, at least when smitten, that which it has forsaken. But behold, Holy Scripture transfixes drowsy hearts with a kind of dread, in order that they may not cling to those things which come to nothing without, but which have eternally ruined them within. It points out to us what is decreed by the secret sentence, in order that these outward things may not be too much thought of. It informs us what is doing above us with regard to us, in order that we may turn the eyes of our heart from these outward and temporal objects, to the secret of the inward disposal. For after much had been said, concerning the punishment of the wicked, there is suddenly introduced the secret judgment, mercifully and justly passed upon us: how some lose that which they appeared to hold fast, and some receive that which others deservedly lose. For he says,

Ver. 24. *He shall break in pieces many and without number, and shall make others to stand in their stead.*

viii. 19. This is daily occurring. But because the end of both parties is not seen as yet, it is less dreaded. For the reprobate never acknowledge their fault, excepting when under punishment. And because punishment is deferred, the fault is made light of. But they fall from a state of righteousness, and others, on their fall, obtain the place of life. But they think not of their fall, since they do not consider the death which awaits them for ever. For did they but turn their eyes to what they are about to suffer there, they would tremble at what they are doing here. But it is plain to all that Almighty God will make a public enquiry at that final ordeal, so as to give up some to torments, and admit others to a participation of the heavenly kingdom. But that is now daily taking place by a secret, which is then made manifest by a public, judgment. For either searching, or ordering, the hearts of men, one by one, with justice and mercy, He casts forth some of them to outward pursuits, and leads others on to those which are within. He inspires these to seek for inward joys, and leaves those to think, for their pleasure, on outward things. He raises the mind of these to heavenly objects, and immerses the pride of the others in the basest desires. But the hearts of other men are shut up from

human sight, and it is not known who is rejected; since the thoughts of each man cannot be penetrated. For ofttimes, though the heart be evilly disposed, the deliberation of thought has not been carried into effect, and a man is perhaps still constrained within by habit, who already wanders abroad in his mind. But such an one, whoever he be, fell in the sight of the inward Judge, as soon as he departed in desire from seeking for things within. But others, sometimes, after a course of evil living, revive, with sudden affection, to a hope of heaven, and they who had dissipated themselves by sinful conduct, bring themselves back, by self reproof, to the bosom of inward repentance. And men still looking back to this conduct, think them still to be such, as they knew them to be in behaviour. But they themselves, on the other hand, by the examination of strict consideration, attack their former life as they remember it to have been; and it is known what they were, but what they have now begun to be is not known. In both then of these classes it is frequently the case, that both they who in the judgment of men seem to stand, are already fallen in the sight of the Eternal Judge: and that those who are still fallen before men, already stand firm in the sight of the Eternal Judge. For what man could suppose that Judas, even after the ministry of the apostleship, would lose his portion in life? And who would believe, on the other hand, that the thief would find a means of life even at the very instant of his death? But the Judge secretly presiding, and discerning the hearts of these two persons, mercifully established the one, and justly crushed the other. He cast forth the one with severity, He drew the other within of His mercy. And hence in announcing even by His Prophet, that some would fall and others be raised up at the time of His passion, He well says, *I mingled My drink with weeping.* For drink is drawn in from without, but weeping pours out from within. For the Lord then to mingle drink with weeping, is for Him to draw some within, from outward things, and to cast off others from an inward to an outward condition. *He shall break in pieces*, then, *many and without number, and shall make others to stand in their stead.*

Book XXV.

Ps. 102, 9.

20. But, as was said before, this breaking is first wrought

Job 34, 24. within, in order to its being afterwards displayed without. By this breaking the outward parts of some sometimes appear to be still sound, while the inward parts have already rotted away. For it is written, *Before ruin the heart is exalted.* They are smitten then on the very point in which they are proud. Whence it is written, *I have broken their heart which committeth fornication, and which departeth from Me.* For to delight outwardly in forbidden objects, is to commit fornication within. But this very pride of the haughty man is a great crushing of his heart. For he falls from the integrity of sound health, just as he is puffed up with pride, on account of any virtue. For proud men despise God, and, forsaking the glory of the Creator, seek their own. And, for them to have lost the support of their superior, and to have sunk back on themselves, is for them to have already fallen. They are crushed too because, having abandoned the things of heaven, they seek the earth. For what greater crushing can there be, than, having forsaken the Creator, to seek the creature, having forsaken the joys above, to be eager only for things below? Whence it is well said by the Prophet, *But He humbles sinners even to the earth.* For when they have lost heavenly things, every thing which they thirst after is earthly, and while they endeavour to seem greater, that which they seek after is of less value. Of whom it is well said by Jeremiah, *Departing from Thee they shall be written in the earth.* But it is said on the other hand of the Elect, *Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.* This crushing, then, first steals on in the mind, in order that it may afterwards advance in outward act. It shakes first the foundation of the thoughts, in order to smite afterwards the fabric of conduct. We must labour therefore with the greatest care, in order that it may be avoided in the place where it takes its rise. For it is written, *Keep thy heart with all watchfulness, because life proceedeth from it.* And it is written again, *From the heart proceed evil thoughts.* We must watch, therefore, within, lest the mind should fall, when it is exalted. Let us guard within all that we do without. For, if once the rottenness of pride has eaten into the marrow of the heart, the empty husk of outward appearance speedily falls. But we must

Prov. 16, 18.

Ez. 6, 9.

Ps. 147, 6.

Jer. 17, 13.

Luke 10, 20.

Prov. 4, 23.

Mat. 15, 19.

observe, that, while some are said to receive strength to stand firm, when others fall, the number of the Elect is shewn to be fixed and definite. Whence it is said also, to the Church of Philadelphia, through its Angel, *Hold fast that which thou hast, that another take not thy crown.* Rev. 3, 11.

21. By this announcement then, in which it is said, that the life of some is exalted, and that of others is crushed, both the hope of the humble is cherished, and the pride of the haughty brought low: since those can forfeit the good qualities of which they are proud, and these enjoy the good things, which they were despised for not possessing. Let us tremble, then, at the blessings we have received, and not despair of those who have not yet obtained them. For we know what we are to-day; but we know not what we may become after a little while. But these persons whom, perchance, we despise, can begin late, and yet surpass our conduct, by their more fervent zeal. We must fear, therefore, lest he should rise, even on our fall, who is now derided by us, who are standing firm: although, indeed, he knows not how to stand firm himself, who has learned to ridicule him, who is yet unsteady. But the Apostle Paul, enforcing this dread of heavenly judgments, into the hearts of his disciples, says, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* 1 Cor. 10, 12. But by saying, *He breaketh in pieces,* and by adding immediately, *without number*, he desired either to express the number of the reprobate, which surpasses the amount of human calculation; or he, certainly, wished to point out, that all who perish are not reckoned in the number of the Elect, and that they are therefore innumerable, as running beyond the number. Whence the Prophet, on beholding that as many, at this period of the Church, believe only in appearance, as it is doubtless certain exceed the number and amount of the Elect, declares, *They are multiplied above number.* As though he were saying to many who are entering the Church, Even those come to the faith in appearance only, who are excluded from the number of the kingdom, because in truth they surpass by their multiplicity the number of the Elect. Whence also it is said by the Prophet Jeremiah, *The city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Ananchel, even to the* Jer. 31, 38.

Job 34, 25. *gate of the corner, and it will go forth beyond the standard of measure.* For no one in truth is ignorant that Holy Church is the city of the Lord. But Ananehel is interpreted the grace of God, and two walls meet together in a corner. The city of the Lord is said therefore to be built from the tower of Ananehel, even to the gate of the corner: because Holy Church, beginning from the loftiness of Divine grace, is built up, as far as to the entrance of both peoples, namely, Jew and Gentile. But because, as its members increase, reprobates also are included therein, it is fitly added, *And it will go forth beyond the standard of measure:* because it is extended even to those who, transgressing the standard of justice, are not within the number of the heavenly measure. Whence it is said also to the same Church by Isaiah,

Is. 54, 3. *For thou shalt spread forth on the right hand, and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles.* For it is extended in so great a multitude of Gentiles, to the right hand, when it admits some to be justified. And it is extended to the left also, when it admits into itself some who will even remain in sin. On account of this multitude, which lies beyond the number of the Elect, the Lord says in

Mat. 20, 16. the Gospel, *Many are called but few are chosen.* But, because some are crushed, while others are chosen, in consequence of the deserts of the sufferer, and not from the

Rom 3, 5. injustice of Him who punishes, (for *God is not unjust, Who inflicteth wrath,*) it is fitly subjoined,

Ver. 25. *For He knoweth their works, and therefore will He bring night on them, and they shall be crushed.*

ix. 22. It is specially to be understood, that every sinner is, in two ways, crushed in the night; either when he is struck by the suffering of punishment from without, or when he is blinded by a secret sentence within. He falls at night, when he loses for ever the light of life, by the last judgment.

Mat. 22, 13. Whence it is written, *Bind him hands and feet, and send him into outer darkness.* For he is then sent of force into outer darkness; because he is now blinded of his own will with darkness within. But, again, the sinner is crushed at night, when, condemned by the overthrow of former sinners, he finds not the light of truth, and knows not what he ought to do for the future. For every sin, which is not

speedily wiped out by penitence, is either a sin, and a cause of sin, or else a sin, and the punishment of sin. For a sin which penitence does not wash away, soon leads on, by its very weight, to another. Whence it is not only a sin, but a sin, and a cause of sin. For, from that sin, a succeeding fault takes its rise, by which the blinded mind is led on to endure greater bondage from another. But a sin which arises from a sin, is no longer merely a sin, but a sin, and a punishment of sin. Because Almighty God obscures, by a just judgment, the heart of a sinner, that he may fall into other sins also, through desert of his former sin. For the man whom He willed not to set free, He has smitten by forsaking him. That, then, is not improperly called the punishment of sin, which, in consequence of a just blindness having been inflicted from above, is committed by way of punishment for former offences. And it is the result of a system, ordained indeed above, but thrown into confusion by men's wickedness below, that a preceding sin is the cause of that which follows, and, again, a subsequent sin the punishment of that which precedes it. This seed, as it were, of error, Paul had clearly observed in the unbelieving and unstable, when saying, *Who when they had known God, glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their thoughts.* Rom. 1, 21. But he immediately added that which sprang up from this seed of error, saying, *Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their own heart unto uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.* Rom. 1, 24. For because, though knowing God, they wittingly committed the sin of pride, they are also so blinded as not to be aware of the sin they are committing. And they who are unwilling to follow their own understanding in sin, that is the cause of sin, are deprived of the light of understanding in sin, that is the punishment of sin. The pitfal of subsequent sins is covered over by the demerits of former sins, in order that he, who knowingly commits sin, may afterwards fall, even unwittingly, in other sins.

23. It is provided, in fact, that some faults are smitten with other faults, in order that their very growth in sin may be the punishment of sinners. For because Almighty God grants time for repentance, which human wickedness perverts, never-

Job 34, 25. theless, to the practice of its own iniquity, our guilt is doubtless permitted to increase by the just judgment of God, in order that it may be heaped up, for Him to strike it at last a heavier blow. For hence the Apostle Paul says again of 1 Thess. 2, 16. certain persons, *To fill up their sins always.* Hence it is Rev. 22, 11. said to John by the voice of the angel, *He that hurteth let him hurt still, he that is filthy let him be filthy still.* Ps. 69, 27. Hence David says, *Add iniquity unto their iniquity, that they may not enter into Thy righteousness.* Hence again it Ps. 78, 49. 50. is said of the Lord by the same Psalmist, *Suggestions*[1] *by evil angels He made a way for the path of His anger.* For the [1] *Immissiones.* Lord justly permits the heart which has been weighed down by former demerits, to be deceived also by the subsequent persuasions of malignant spirits, for, when it is deservedly led into sin, its guilt is increased in its punishment. Whence also the Lord is said to have made a way for His wrath out of a path. For a way is broader than a path. But to make out of a path a way for His wrath, is, by strictly judging to extend the causes of His wrath, that they who refused, when enlightened, to act rightly, may, when justly blinded, still so act as to deserve a greater punishment. Hence it is said by Gen. 15, 16. Moses, *The sins of the Amorites are not yet full.* Hence Deut. 32, 32—35. the Lord says by the same Moses, *For their vine is of the vineyard of Sodom, and their stock is of Gomorrah. Their grape is a grape of gall, and the cluster of bitterness is in them. Their wine is the fury of dragons and the rage of asps, which cannot be healed. Are not all these things stored up with Me, and sealed up in My treasures? In the day of vengeance I will repay them.* How many of their sins has He revealed, and yet He immediately subjoins, *In the time when their foot shall have stumbled.* Behold, their most abominable misdeeds are described, and yet for the day of vengeance, their subsequent fall is looked forward to, whereby their faults are to be heaped up to the full. They already have enough to deserve punishment; but their sin is still suffered to increase, in order that, sinning, a heavier punishment may torture them. Sin, the cause of sin, already deserves punishment; but it is still deferred, in order that sin, the punishment of sin, may supply an increase of suffering.

24. But frequently one and the same sin is also a sin such as

is both a punishment, and a cause of sin. We shall make this more plain, by bringing forward some instances. For unrestrained gluttony excites the fulness of the flesh to the heat of lust. But lust, when committed, is frequently concealed either by perjury or murder, for fear it should be punished by the vengeance of human laws. Let us suppose to ourselves then, that a man has given the reins to his gluttony, that, being overcome by his gluttony, he has committed the sin of adultery, that being detected in adultery, he has secretly murdered the husband of the adulteress, lest he should be brought to judgment. This adultery then, standing between gluttony and murder, springing from the one, and giving being to the other, is a sin, and both the punishment, and the cause of sin also. It is in truth a sin of itself, but the punishment of sin, because it has increased the guilt of gluttony; but it is the cause of sin, because it also gave birth to the subsequent murder. One and the same sin, then, is both the punishment of the preceding, and the cause of the subsequent, sin: because it both condemns past sins, while it adds to their amount, and sows the seeds of future sins, to deserve condemnation. Because then the eye of the heart is blinded by previous sins, that blindness which confuses the mind of the sinner, by condemning him for his former offence, is properly designated 'night:' because by this the light of truth is concealed from the eye of the sinner. It is therefore well said, *For He knoweth their works, and therefore will He bring night on them, and they shall be crushed.* Because, as has been often observed, they doubtless commit previous offences, in order that they should be involved again in sin by the darkness which follows, so that they are now as unable to behold the light of righteousness, as they were unwilling to behold it when they were able. But the Lord is said to bring night on them, not because He Himself brings on the darkness, but because He does not enlighten in His mercy the darkened hearts of sinners. So that His having blinded men in the night is His not having willed to deliver them from the gloom of blindness. It follows,

Ver. 26. *He hath smitten them as ungodly men, in the place of beholders.*

Job 34, 26. X.

25. In holy Scripture the word 'as,' is wont to be used, sometimes for resemblance, sometimes for reality. For it is used for resemblance, as when the Apostle says, *As sorrowful,* 2 Cor. 6, 10. *yet always rejoicing:* but for the reality, as John says, *We* John 1, 14. *beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father.* But in this passage it makes no difference, whether it is put for resemblance, or reality: for, in whatever way it is taken, the evil life of the wicked is plainly signified. But holy Scripture specially calls unbelievers 'ungodly.' For sinners are distinguished from ungodly by this difference, that though every ungodly man is a sinner, yet every sinner is not ungodly. For even a man who is godly in the Faith 1 John 1, 8. can be called a sinner. Whence John says, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.* But a man is properly called 'ungodly' who is estranged from the holiness of Ps. 1, 5. religion. For of such the Prophet says, *The ungodly shall not rise up in the judgment.* But Holy Church is called *the place of beholders.* For people rightly assemble therein, in order that the True Light, which is God Himself, may be Ex. 33, 21. 22. seen. Whence it is said to Moses, *There is a place by Me,* ib. 23. *and thou shalt stand upon a rock, when My Majesty passeth by.* And shortly afterwards, *I will take away My hand, and thou shalt see My back parts.* For, by the place, is typified the Church, but by the rock, the Lord, but by Moses, the multitude of the people of Israel, which did not believe, when the Lord was preaching upon earth. It stood, therefore, on the rock, beholding the back of the Lord, as He was passing by: because in truth having been brought into Holy Church, after the Passion and Ascension of the Lord, it obtained a knowledge of the faith in Christ, and beheld the back parts of Him, Whose presence it had not seen. Let it be said, then, of those whom Divine Vengeance finds within Holy Church, still persisting in their iniquities; let it be said of these, whose conduct Paul describes thus, Tit. 1, 16. *Who confess that they know God, but in works they deny Him:* let it be said of these, *He hath smitten them AS ungodly in the place of beholders.* For they were standing in that place, where they seemed to see God. They loved darkness in that very place, where the light of truth is beheld. And although they had had their eyes opened in

faith, yet they kept them closed in their works. Whence it is also well said of Judæa, *Her watchmen are blind*, because, namely, they did not behold in works that which they saw in profession. Whence it is written also of Balaam, *Who falling hath his eyes open.* For, falling in works, he kept his eyes open in contemplation. In like manner these also, who open their eyes in faith, and who see not in works, who are placed, from their appearance of piety, within the Church, are found, by their ungodly conversation, without the Church. Of whom it is well written in another place, *I saw the ungodly buried, who when they were alive, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city, as men of just works.*

Book XXV. Is. 56, 10. Num. 24, 16. Eccles. 8, 10.

26. But the very tranquillity of the peace of the Church conceals many under the Christian name, who are beset with the plague of their own wickedness. But if a light breath of persecution strikes them, it sweeps them away at once as chaff from the threshing floor. But some persons wish to bear the mark of Christian calling, because, since the name of Christ has been exalted on high, nearly all persons now look to appear faithful, and from seeing others called thus, they are ashamed not to seem faithful themselves; but they neglect to be that which they boast of being called. For they assume the reality of inward excellence, to adorn their outward appearance: and they who stand before the heavenly Judge, naked from the unbelief of their heart, are clothed, in the sight of men, with a holy profession, at least in words.

27. But some persons maintain the faith in their inmost heart, but are not careful to live faithfully. For they assail in their conduct that which they reverence in profession. And it frequently happens that they lose, by Divine judgment, even that which they wholesomely believe, through the wickedness of their lives. For they unceasingly pollute themselves by wicked deeds, and do not believe that the vengeance of just judgment can fall in retribution upon this conduct. And frequently, when they neglect to live strictly, they fall into unbelief, even when no one persecutes them. For they who do not believe that a strict judgment is hanging over them, who imagine that they can sin, without being

Job 34, 26. punished for it; how can they either be, or be called, faithful? For to believe that due punishment cannot be inflicted on their unrepented wickedness, is to have lost their faith. Because then they scorn to maintain works worthy of faith, they lose even the faith which they seemed to possess. And the language of destroying enemies over these is fitly mentioned by the Prophet, under the character of Jerusalem. For it is said by them, *Make her void, make her void, even to the foundation thereof.* For Paul says, *Other foundation can no man lay but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.* Destroying enemies, then, make Jerusalem bare, even to the foundation, when evil spirits, having first destroyed the edifice of good works, draw away also the firm foundation of religion from the hearts of the faithful. For works are built on faith, as a building on a foundation. To have laid bare then even to the foundation, is, after having overthrown good works, to have scattered the strength of faith. Hence also it is said to Judæa by Jeremiah, *The sons also of Memphis and Taphnis have polluted thee even to the head.* For to be polluted even to the head, is, after a habit of evil deeds, to be corrupted in the very sublimity of the faith. For when abandoned spirits involve the soul of any one in wicked works, but cannot pollute the integrity of his faith, they pollute, as yet, the inferior members, as it were, but reach not to the head. But whoever is corrupted in the faith, is at once defiled even to the head. For a malignant spirit reaches, as it were, from the inferior even to the higher members, when, defiling the outward conduct, it corrupts with the disease of unbelief the pure loftiness of the faith. Because then all these things are hidden from the eyes of men, but are open to the sight of God, and many die, without faith, in this abode of faith itself, let it be rightly said, *He hath smitten them as ungodly men, in the place of beholders.* For they exhibit themselves, before men in the Church, as godly persons, but because they cannot escape the Divine judgments, they are smitten as ungodly. And it tends to increase their punishment, that each of them, having been thrown together with the faithful in the Church, wittingly despised the verity of the faith. And a heavier punishment follows them, as the knowledge of good living also attends

Ps. 137, 7.

1 Cor. 3, 11.

Jer. 2, 16.

them in the examples of righteous men. For the righteous and faithful brethren who are now set before them, are so many witnesses to assail them in the coming judgment. They know, therefore, that which they neglect to follow. Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 27. *Who departed from Him, as it were on purpose.*

xi. 28. For we must understand that a sin is committed in three ways. For it is perpetrated either through ignorance, or infirmity, or of set purpose. And we sin more grievously from infirmity than through ignorance, but much more grievously of set purpose than from infirmity. Paul had sinned from ignorance, when he said, *Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* 1 Tim. 1, 13. But Peter sinned through infirmity, when the single word of a damsel shook in him all that strength of faith, which he had spoken of to the Lord, and when he denied, with his voice, the Lord Whom he held firm in his heart. Mat. 26, 69. Ibid. 33. But because a sin of infirmity or ignorance is wiped away the more easily, as it is not wilfully committed, Paul amended by knowledge the points on which he was ignorant: and Peter strengthened the root of faith which was moved, and, as it were, withering away, by watering it with his tears. Ibid. 75. But those persons sinned intentionally, of whom the Master Himself said, *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.* John 15, 22. And a little after, *They have both seen, and hated, both Me and My Father.* Ibid. 24. For not to do good is one thing, to hate a teacher of goodness another: as it is one thing to sin from precipitancy, and another thing to sin deliberately. For a sin is often committed from precipitation, which yet is condemned on thought and deliberation. For it frequently happens that a man through infirmity loves what is right, and cannot perform it. But to sin deliberately is neither to love nor to do what is good. As it is therefore sometimes a heavier offence to love sin than to commit it, it is, in like manner, more sinful to hate righteousness, than not to have performed it. There are some then in the Church, who so far from doing good, even persecute it, and who even detest in others, what they neglect to do themselves. The sin of these

Job 34, 27. persons is in truth not committed from infirmity or ignorance, but of intention alone: because, namely, if they wished to do what is right, and were unable, they would at least love in others, what they neglect in themselves. For were they but only to wish for it themselves, they would not hate it when done by others. But because they despise in their lives, and persecute with severity the very same good qualities which they know and hear of, it is rightly said, *Who departed from Him of purpose.* Whence also it is rightly subjoined,

And would not understand any of His ways.

xii. 29. For he says not, they understand not through infirmity, but they would not understand; because men frequently also despise the knowledge of those things, which they are Luke 12, 47. 48. too proud to do. For since it is written, *The servant that knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes, and the servant which knew his Lord's will, and did not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes,* they consider that their ignorance secures impunity for their sin. But they are doubtless overwhelmed with the darkness of pride alone, and therefore discern not, because it is one thing to have been ignorant, another to have refused to learn. For not to know is only ignorance, to refuse to learn is pride. And they are the less able to plead ignorance in excuse, the more that knowledge is set before them even against their will. Whence Prov. 8, 1. 2. it is said by Solomon, *Doth not wisdom cry, and prudence put forth her voice, standing on the top of lofty places, above the way, in the middle of the paths?* We might perhaps be able to pass along the way of this present life, in ignorance of this Wisdom, if She had not Herself stood in the corners of the way.

30. If It had wished to be concealed, it would have been necessary to search after It. But after It has publicly displayed the mysteries of the Incarnation, after It has exhibited to the proud a pattern of humility, It placed Itself, as it were, in the middle of the way as we were passing along it; in order, namely, that we might strike against that which we are unwilling to look for, and touch and stumble over that which we neglect to observe as we are passing by

it. Let it be said then, *And they would not understand any of His ways.* For the way of Incarnate Wisdom is every action which He did in time. His ways are the courses of life, which He has laid down for those who are coming to Him. He has marked out as many ways for those who come to Him, as many patterns as He has set forth of holy living. The Prophet had beheld His ways of humility, when he sighed, saying, *I will exercise myself in Thy commands, and I will consider Thy ways.* Hence again it is said of every righteous man who takes care to walk after the pattern of the Lord. *The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and he desireth greatly His way.* Because then all haughty men despise the doings of the Lord's humility, it is rightly said, *They would not understand His ways.* For these ways are mean in appearance, but are to be reverenced in understanding; since that which is seen in them is one thing, that which is looked for is another. For what else does it present in this life to the eyes of beholders, but degradation, spitting, insults, and death? But we pass through this lowliness to the highest glory. By these disgraces, which precede, eternal and glorious things are promised to us. Haughty men then have seen the ways of the Lord, but have refused to understand them, because by despising the mean appearance they present in themselves, they have lost the sublime promises which they offer. To understand, then, the ways of the Lord, is both to endure humbly what is transitory, and steadily to wait for that which is to abide; in order that, after the pattern of the Lord, coeternal glory, which is purchased by temporal disgrace, may be sought for, and that a person may not fix his mind on that which he suffers here, but on that which he looks for. Haughty men, then, have kept their eyes closed to these things, because while they pride themselves on the glory of this present life, they have not seen the loftiness of the Lord's humility. For humility discloses to us the light of understanding, pride conceals it. For it is a kind of secret blessing of a holy life: and the mind attains to it the less, the more it is puffed up: because it is driven away from it, the more madly it is inspired. It follows,

Book XXV.

Ps. 119, 15.

Ps. 37, 23.

Ver. 28. *That they might cause the cry of the needy to*

Job 34, 28. *come to Him, and that He might hear the voice of the poor.*

xiii. 31. For when these men are proud, they who are oppressed by their pride, cry aloud to God. Or certainly, it is said that they have caused the cry of the poor to come to God, because, on their fall, the poor, that is, the humble in spirit, are appointed in their room. And because this has taken place on their fall, they are said to have done it themselves: by the very same mode of expression with which we say that a camp fights, because men fight out of it. Or certainly, because every thing which has been stated above, can also be referred to the rulers of the Church, who give up the office of preaching, and are involved in worldly business, on occasion of exercising authority, it is fitly subjoined, *That they might cause the cry of the needy to come to Him, and that He might hear the voice of the poor.* For certainly while, from being engaged in worldly cares, they abandon the duty of preaching, they compel the flock which is under them to burst out into clamorous complaint. So that each of those under them complains, as if justly, of the conduct of the pretended pastor, why doth he hold the place of a teacher, who doth not exercise the office? Although, by 'the pride of mighty men,' the haughtiness of the Jews, and by 'the cry of the poor,' the longings of the Gentiles, are perhaps more appropriately typified. Just as by the rich man feasting sumptuously, as the Truth Itself witnesses, the Jewish people is designated, which makes use of the fulness of the Law, not for the needful purpose of salvation, but for the pomp of pride, and which does not refresh itself moderately with the teaching of the commandments, but makes a boastful display of them. And by the wounded Lazarus, (which is by interpretation, 'Assisted,') is set forth the condition of the Gentile people, whom the Divine assistance exalts the more, the less it relies on the resources of its own strength. And he is described as poor and full of wounds, because the Gentile world has, with humble heart, laid open the confession of its sins. For as in a wound the venom is drawn towards the skin from within, so, in like manner, while secrets are disclosed by the confession of sin, evil humours, as it were, break forth from the inmost parts

Luke 16, 19—31.

of the body. When they sin then, the cry of the poor is heard; because, while the Jews are proud against God, the prayers of the Gentiles are come up to God. Whence also, from his awe at those boundless and unfathomable judgments, he does not care to discuss them with reasoning, but to venerate them with admiration, and says, Book XXV.

Ver. 29. *For when He giveth peace, who is there to condemn? since He hath hidden His face, who is there that can look on Him?*

32. Let no one then discuss, why the Gentile world lay so long in unbelief, while the Jewish people was yet standing, and why the sin of unbelief overthrew the Jewish people, as the Gentile world rose to belief. Let no one discuss, why one is drawn on, as of a free gift, and the other repelled according to its deserts. For if thou art surprised at the adoption of the Gentiles, *When He giveth peace, who is there to condemn?* If thou art startled at the loss of the Jews, *Since He hath hidden His face, who is there that can look on Him?* So the counsel of supreme and hidden power becomes the satisfaction of evident reason. Whence also the Lord in the Gospel says, when speaking on the subject of this matter, *I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father.* And He immediately adds, as a kind of reason for this concealment and revealing, *For so it hath seemed good before Thee.* In which words, in truth, we learn a pattern of humility, that we may not rashly presume to discuss the Divine counsels concerning the call of the one and the rejection of the others. For after He had mentioned both points, He did not at once give a reason, but said that it was thus well pleasing to God; pointing out, namely, this very point, that that cannot be unjust, which has seemed good to the Just One. Whence also He says, when paying the labourers in the vineyard, on equalling in compensation those who were unequal in work, and when he who had toiled longest asked for greater pay, *Didst thou not agree with Me for a penny? I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with Mine own?* In all things then which are outwardly disposed by Him, the righteousness of His secret

xiv. Rom. 11, 20. Mat. 11, 25. Mat. 11, 26. Mat. 20, 13—15.

Job 34, 29. will is an evident cause of reason. Let it be said therefore, *For when He giveth peace, who is there to condemn? since He hath hidden His face, who is there that can look on Him?* And because God judges the least, in the same way as the greatest, things, and the doings of individuals, as those of all men, it is fitly subjoined,

Both over a nation, and over all men.

xv. 33. As if we were plainly directed to observe, that this judgment which is spoken of over a single nation, is also exercised over all men, by an invisible examination; so that one man is secretly elected, and another rejected, but no one unjustly. This then which we see happening in the greatest cases, let us also anxiously fear in ourselves separately. For the Divine judgments are displayed in the same manner over a single soul as over a single city; and again in the same way over a single city, as over a single nation: and over a single nation, as over the whole multitude of the human race. Because the Lord is as attentive to particular persons, as though unconcerned with the world at large; and again so directs His attention to all at once, as though unconcerned with individuals. For He Who fills all things with His dispensation, rules by filling them, and when ordering one single thing, is still present in all, and again, when ordering the world at large, is present with each individual; in fact, works all things without moving, by the power of His own nature. What marvel, then, that He, when intent on any thing, is not confined to it, Who works still at rest? Let it be said then that He exercises this searching judgment both over a nation, and over all men. Because he has passed then from species to genus, he now turns himself from genus to species, and shews what Judæa properly deserves, saying,

Ver. 30. *Who maketh a man that is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people.*

xvi. 34. For Judæa was unwilling that the true King should reign over it, and therefore obtained a hypocrite, as its merits demanded. As the Truth Itself says in the Gospel,

John 5, 43. *I have come in My Father's name, and ye received Me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*

2 Thess. 2,10.11. And as Paul says, *Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, therefore God shall send*

them the operation of error, that they should believe a lie. In that, then, which is said, *Who maketh a man that is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people*, may be designated Antichrist, the very chief of all hypocrites. For that seducer then pretends to sanctity, that he may draw men away to iniquity. But he is permitted to reign for the sins of the people, because, in truth, they are preordained to be under his rule, who are foreseen before all ages to be worthy of being his subjects, who by their subsequent sins, claim to be placed under him by antecedent judgments. That Antichrist then reigns over the ungodly arises not from the injustice of the Judge, but from the sin of the sufferer. Although most of them have not beheld his sovereign power, and yet are enslaved to it, by the condition in which their sins have placed them. Because they, doubtless, reverence even him by their evil lives, whom they do not see tyrannizing over them. Are not they his very members, who seek by a shew of affected sanctity to seem what they are not? For he in a special manner assumes a false guise, who though a lost man, and an evil spirit, falsely announces himself to be God. But they unquestionably now come forth from his body, who conceal their iniquities under the cloak of sacred honour, in order to seek to seem to be that in profession, which they refuse to be in their doings. For since it is written, that *whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*, the more freely they now commit the sins which they desire, the more strictly are they bound down to his service. But let no one who suffers such a ruler, blame him whom he suffers: because his being subject to the power of a wicked ruler was doubtless of his own desert. Let him therefore rather blame the fault of his own evil doings, than the injustice of his ruler. For it is written, *I will give thee kings in Mine anger.* Why then do we scorn their being set over us, whose authority over us we endure from the anger of the Lord? If then we receive rulers, according to our deserts, from the wrath of God, we infer from their conduct, what to think in our estimate of ourselves. Although even the Elect are frequently placed under the reprobate. Whence also David for a long time endured Saul. But it is proved by the subsequent sin of

2 Thess. 2, 4.

John 8, 34.

Hos. 13, 11.

2 Sam. 12, 11.

Job 34, 30. adultery, that he then deserved to be thus heavily oppressed by the cruelty of him who was set over him.

35. The characters, then, of rulers are so assigned according to the deserts of their subjects, that frequently they who seem to be good are soon changed by the acceptance of power. As holy Scripture observed of the same Saul that he changed his heart with his dignity. Whence it is written, 1 Sam. 15, 17. *When thou wast little in thine own eyes, I made thee the head among the tribes of Israel.* The conduct of rulers is so ordered with reference to the characters of their subjects, that frequently the conduct of even a truly good shepherd becomes sinful, in consequence of the wickedness of his flock. For that Prophet David, who had been praised by the witness of God Himself, who had been made acquainted with heavenly mysteries, being puffed up by the swelling of sudden 2 Sam. 24, 1-17. pride, sinned in numbering the people. And yet, though David sinned, the people endured the punishment. Why was this? Because in truth the hearts of rulers are disposed according to the deserts of their people. But the righteous Judge reproved the fault of the sinner, by the punishment of those very persons, on whose account he sinned. But because he was not exempt from guilt, as displaying pride of his own free will, he himself endured also the punishment of his sin. For that furious wrath which smote the people in their bodies, prostrated the ruler of the people by the pain of his inmost heart. But it is certain that the deserts of rulers and people are so mutually connected, that frequently the conduct of the people is made worse from the fault of their pastors, and the conduct of pastors is changed according to the deserts of their people.

36. But because rulers have their own Judge, subjects must be very careful not to judge rashly the conduct of their rulers. For the Lord Himself did not without a reason scatter the money of the changers, and overthrow the seats Mat. 21, 12. of them that were selling doves, signifying doubtless that He judges the conduct of people by their rulers, but that He examines into the doings of rulers in His own person. And yet even those sins of subjects, which are put off from being judged, or which cannot be judged by rulers, are doubtless reserved for His judgment. Therefore whilst all is done

in good faith, it is a worthy part of virtue, if whatever is in a superior is tolerated. Yet it ought to be humbly suggested whether any thing which displeases can be amended. But great care must be taken that an inordinate maintenance of justice does not degenerate into pride: lest humility, the mistress of what is right, should be lost, while what is right itself is loved without due caution; lest a man should slight him as his superior, whom he may perhaps happen to blame in some part of his conduct. But the mind of subjects is trained to guard its humility against this swelling pride, if its own weakness is constantly watched. For we neglect to examine honestly our own strength, and because we believe ourselves stronger than we really are, we consequently judge those severely who are set over us. For the more we neglect to know ourselves, the more clearly do we see those whom we endeavour to blame. These are the several evils which are often committed by subjects against their rulers, and by rulers against their subjects. Because both rulers consider all their subjects to be less wise than themselves, and subjects, again, judge the conduct of their rulers, and think that they could do better, if they perchance possessed the power. Since it is frequently the case that rulers see less judiciously what is to be done, because the mist of pride obscures their sight, and that a subject, when raised to high power, sometimes does the very same thing, which he used to complain of when a subject; and that, having committed the very faults which he has condemned, he is ashamed at all events that he condemned them. As rulers then must take care that their higher position does not puff up their minds, with a notion of their singular wisdom, so must subjects be careful not to be offended at the conduct of their rulers.

Book XXV.

37. But even if the conduct of rulers is justly blamed, yet it is the duty of subjects to pay them respect, even when they displease them. But thou must carefully observe not to be anxious to imitate a person whom it is necessary for thee to reverence, and not to scorn to reverence him whom thou despisest to imitate. For the narrow path of rectitude and humility must be so maintained, that, though offended with the reprehensible conduct of their rulers, the mind of subjects

Job 34, 31. may not depart from observing respect for their office. Which is well set forth in Noah when drunk, the nakedness Gen. 9, 23. of whose secret parts his sons came and covered with averted looks. For we are said to be averse from that which we reprobate. What is meant then by his sons' coming with averted looks, and covering the shame of their father with a cloak thrown over their backs, except that good subjects, while offended with the misdeeds of their rulers, nevertheless conceal them from others? They bring a covering with averted looks, because judging the deeds, and reverencing the office, they do not wish to behold the sin which they conceal.

38. But there are some, who if they have made ever so small a beginning in spiritual conversation, on observing that their rulers fix their thoughts only on worldly and temporal objects, begin to blame the disposition of supreme Providence as if they were improperly appointed to rule, since they set an example of worldly conversation. But these persons, from not being careful to keep themselves from censure of their rulers, (as their fault justly demands,) proceed to blame even the Creator. For His dispensation is understood to be more right by the humble, for the very same reason that it is not judged to be right by the proud. For because the power of office cannot be exercised without our engaging in worldly cares, therefore Almighty God, in His marvellous dispensation of mercy, frequently imposes the burden of rule on hard and laborious hearts; in order that the tender minds of spiritual men may be released from worldly cares: in order that the one may be more safely concealed from the bustle of the world, the more willingly the others employ themselves in worldly anxieties. For hard are the ways of worldly slavery, in the discharge of a burden that has been undertaken even for the good of others.

39. And frequently, as has been said, as the Merciful God tenderly loves His own, so does He anxiously conceal them from outward employments. For often the father of a family appoints his servants to that work, from which he releases subtiles. his delicate sons; and his sons are comely and free from annoyance, from the fact that the servants are defiled with dust. And how properly this is ordered in the Church by

Divine appointment is signified by the very construction of the tabernacle. For Moses is commanded by the voice of God to weave curtains of fine linen, and scarlet, and blue, for the covering of the Holy of Holies within. And he was ordered to spread, for the covering of the tabernacle, curtains of goats' hair, and skins, to sustain the rain, and wind, and dust. What then do we understand by the skins and goats' hair, with which the tabernacle is covered, but the gross minds of men, which are sometimes, hard though they be, placed on high in the Church by the secret judgment of God? And because they are not afraid of being employed in worldly concerns, they must needs bear the winds and storms of temptation which arise from the opposition of this world. But what is signified by the blue, scarlet, and fine linen, but the life of holy men, delicate, but brilliant? And while it is carefully concealed in the tabernacle under goats' hair and skins, its beauty is preserved entire. For in order that the fine linen may shine, the scarlet glitter, and the blue be resplendent with azure brilliance, the skins and the goats' hair endure the rains, the winds, and the dust from above. They then who advance in great excellence within the bosom of holy Church, ought not to despise the doings of their rulers, when they see that they are engaged in the business of the world. For that they penetrate in safety into secret mysteries, is owing to the help of those who buffet with the storms of this world from without. For how would the fine linen retain the grace of its brightness, if the rain were to touch it? Or what splendour and brightness would the scarlet or blue display, should the dust light on, and defile them? Let the strong texture of the goats' hair, then, be placed above, to resist dust; the brightness of the blue, fitted for ornament, be placed beneath. Let those who are engaged in spiritual pursuits alone, adorn the Church. Let those guard her, who are not wearied even with the labours of the world. But let not him who now gleams with spiritual brightness within Holy Church, murmur against his superior, who is employed in worldly business. For if thou glitterest securely within, like scarlet, why dost thou blame the goats' hair with which thou art protected?

Book XXV.

40. But some persons enquire, why it is that[1], while rulers

[1] perhaps 'complain because.'

Job 34, 30. are engrossed in worldly concerns, solely for the benefit of those under them, many in the Church are made worse by their example. For who can deny that this is very true, when he sees worldly concerns more anxiously attended to by pastors, than heavenly objects? But this is not unjust, if, as we said before, the circumstances of rulers are ordered in accordance with the deserts of those under them. For the sins, which they commit secretly and wilfully, demand a bad example to be set them by their pastors: in order that by a righteous judgment the haughty man, who departs from the way of God, may stumble, through the guidance of his pastor, in the way in which he is walking. Whence it is said by the Prophet also, with the zeal of one who is announcing, not with the wish of one who is cursing, *Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not, and ever bow Thou down their back.* As if he were to say, Let those who are appointed to mark out, as it were, the courses of human actions, not enjoy the light of truth, in order that their subjects, who follow them, may be bent down by the burden of their sins, and lose entirely their state of uprightness. And this we know was unquestionably the case in Judæa, when, at the coming of our Redeemer, the multitude of the Pharisees and Priests closed the eyes of their mind against the True Light, and the people, walking after the example of its rulers, wandered in the darkness of unbelief.

Ps. 69, 23.

41. But it can be reasonably asked, How it is said in this place that the Lord makes the hypocrite to reign, when by the Prophet He complains especially of this thing, saying, *They have reigned, but not of Me: they have become princes, and I know them not?* For, who that thinks rightly, can say that the Lord does that of which He knows nothing? But, because God's knowledge is approval, His ignorance is disapproval. Whence He says to some whom He rejects, *I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.* And sometimes God's doing a thing, is His allowing in His anger that which He forbids to be done. Hence He asserted that He hardened the heart of the king of Egypt, because He, in truth, allowed it to be hardened. In a marvellous manner then does God make hypocrites to reign, and knows them not. He makes them, by suffering;

Hos. 8, 4.

Luke 13, 27.

He knows them not, by rejecting them. Whence it is necessary, with reference to every thing, which is desired in this life, that the Inner Will should be first enquired into. And when the ear of the heart is anxious to catch Its sound, let it know that It speaks, not in words, but in deeds. When then a post of authority is offered, it is necessary for a man first to question with himself, whether his conduct is suited to the place, whether his doings are at variance with the distinction it confers; lest, perchance, the just Ruler of all should, afterwards, not regard his prayers in tribulation, because He knows not his very entering on that high office, which is the source of all his tribulation.

Book XXV.

i. e. the Divine.

Note to p. 101.

Ben. here notes that after the words 'they were created,' one Vatican Ms. is quoted as adding, 'They received from the vision of their Ruler that they should abide in themselves without falling. Hereby, however, their wonderful method of standing is formed, in that while they know what they can do of their own stedfastness, they consider what they owe to the government of their Ruler. And the more easily they see that they, as changeable, can fall, the more close do they draw themselves, that they may not fall, to the love of their Ruler. Of their own stedfastness, they know they may still tumble down headlong, but they hold them fast by their Creator with the hand of love, that they may not fall.'

BOOK XXVI.

The holy Doctor expounds the seven last verses of the thirty-fourth chapter, the whole of the thirty-fifth, with the first twenty-one verses of the thirty-sixth chapter; and launches out, at very great length, into both allegorical and moral meanings.

i. 1. Haughty men are wont to display this peculiarity in what they say, that, when they know that they have said any thing in a praiseworthy manner, they then enquire of their hearers, whether they have by chance said any thing out of the way. And this they do, not because they doubt of what they say, but because, namely, they seek for approval, in the judgment of their hearers. For the object of their enquiry will be easily discovered, if when any one praises their good qualities, he also blames their faults. For it is certain, that as they are puffed up by praises, so are they inflamed by reproofs; and when they see that they are blamed, even justly, by any one, they seek at once in their faults for materials of self-defence. How then do they humbly doubt of their own good qualities, who even perversely endeavour to defend their bad ones? For he is really humble in his good doings, who does not defend himself in his evil ones. For he who is reproved for his faults, and fires up against the words of his reprover, when he hesitates, as if humbly, in speaking of his good qualities, seeks, by his words of humility, for compliments, and not for instruction. Elin therefore, as representing the conduct of the haughty, after having stated many spiritual and sublime sentiments, behold, assumes in words an appearance of humility, and under a kind of show of being his disciple, addresses blessed Job with a fair proposal, saying,

Ver. 31, 32. *Because I have spoken to God, I will not hinder thee also. If I have sinned, teach thou me; if I have spoken iniquity, I will add no more.*

2. As it is frequently the case, that even wicked men say what is right, Eliu called to mind that he had made a little before many noble statements, and therefore confidently enquired of him if perchance he had erred. For he would not have thus asked, if he had believed that he had erred. For, as I said, it is a craft peculiar to the boastful to be eager to enquire about their erring, when they know that they have not erred. And, again, they disdain to make this enquiry, and to be convicted of error, whenever they plainly foresee that they have done wrong. For they seek not to be, but to appear, humble, and they assume an appearance of humility, by then making the enquiry, when they are praised the more from the very enquiry itself. But, because it is very difficult for the pride, which reigns in the heart, not to break out in the voice, if the hearers of these haughty men wait for a while, and consider their sayings in silence, the words, which follow, too soon make manifest their hearts. For they cannot continue long in that guise of humility, which they assume in appearance only. For to haughty minds humility is lofty; and when they endeavour to climb up to its beauty they stumble, as if from abrupt and rugged paths, with the weary steps of their mind. For that which they wish to appear is foreign to them: and they cannot therefore long cling close to its resemblance. They count it a heavy burden, when they bear it only in appearance, and they suffer a kind of constraint in their heart, till they cast it aside. Because in truth they are slaves to the habit of pride, which fatally rules over them, and are compelled by its authority to shew what they are, so that they cannot appear, for any time, that which they are not. Whence Eliu also, after he requested to be informed of his error, after he promised that he would no longer speak iniquity, suddenly broke out, from an appearance of humility, into words of proud arguing. For he added, saying, Book XXVI. ii.

Ver. 33. *Doth God require it of thee, because it hath displeased thee?*

3. As though he were saying, I am about to give reasons, in the sight of God, why my iniquity is now blamed by thee, though it is plain that it is not required of thee in judgment. iii.

Job 34, 33. When good men are unrighteously assailed by the world, they appeal to the judgment of heaven. Whence also it is Job 16, 19. said by the same blessed Job, *Behold, my witness is in heaven, and He Who knoweth me is on high.* And because they especially desire to please Him, they seek for the witness of Him only. Wicked men also, because they forsake the life of the just, but sometimes imitate their words, when reproved for their misdeeds adopt that, as a ground of defence, which the righteous urge, as an evidence of their purity. Whence it has become already a custom with them, when any one blames them for their doings, to seek the judgment of God rather than of men. For, even when they know that they will be condemned by God, they are not afraid of being judged by Him, and are ashamed of being judged by men. They prefer, therefore, the greater, which they fear not, in order to be able to avoid the less, of which Rom. 14, 12. they are ashamed. For it is written, *Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* Because then the condemnation of every one is then manifest, the ungodly now gather from it, that, even the wicked conduct of every one is out of danger, that the righteous should now refute and expose that conduct, with which, it is plain, he has no concern in the judgment. But the consciences of the holy consider on the other hand, that a great reward is conferred on them, when they are now convicted of some of their unlawful deeds. For, they set it before the eyes of their heart, that the strict judgment of God will then be more surely mitigated towards them, the more severely it is now anticipated by the reproofs of man. And they consider as a gain the temporal wrath upon them, by which they know well that they can escape the wrath eternal. Let Eliu, therefore, (as representing all haughty men, and choosing rather to be smitten with eternal severity, than to be reproved in this life,) say, *Doth God require it of thee, because it hath displeased thee?* But since those who speak first in a dispute are usually more to blame than those who reply, he subjoins,

iv. *For thou didst begin to speak, not I.*

4. He believed himself to be so far innocent, in as much as he burst forth only on being struck, being doubtless

ignorant that innocence is not defended on the score of time, but on that of reason. For what support does it give to his defence, that, though he did not revile him when silent, when he began properly, he replied to him revilingly? But after he displays himself in words of pride, lo, he again conceals himself under the pretext of a demand, and proceeds to say,

But if thou knowest any thing better, say on.

Although, while he does not say, because thou knowest better, but, *If thou knowest any thing better, say on,* it was itself too proud of him, that he had doubted of the knowledge of his superior. But he signified that he had exhibited his humility, in having given blessed Job an opportunity of speaking. But, as was before stated, that every thing in the doings of the proud, which is concealed by a covering of words, is brought to light, when the boastful purpose again breaks forth, Eliu speedily made known, with what purpose he required blessed Job to speak. For it follows,

Ver. 34, 35. *Let men of understanding speak to me, and let a wise man hear me. But Job hath spoken foolishly, and his words sound not of discipline.*

5. Lo, how he lays open that, which he was cherishing within, when, as if humbly, he allows blessed Job to speak; saying, *Let men of understanding speak to me.* For if blessed Job were to presume to speak, he would have disdained him, as though he could not understand his words. And, because he considered that blessed Job was unworthy not only to speak with, but even to hear, him, he immediately added, *Let a wise man hear me.* As if he were to say, This man is unfairly permitted to speak, who is not worthy even to hear the words of wise men. And he presently shews plainly, how contemptibly he thinks of him, saying, *But Job hath spoken foolishly, and his words sound not of discipline.* He believed that blessed Job had spoken without discipline, because he said, that he had been just in his doings. Eliu would perhaps be speaking truly, if the Author of discipline had not Himself agreed with what blessed Job had said of himself. For Job asserted that he had been scourged undeservedly, whom God declared also to have been smitten without reason. What haughtiness

Job 34, 36. then did the voice of the sufferer utter, which did not at all differ from the sentence of the Smiter? Those persons are inconsiderately humble, who, whilst they avoid pride, ensnare themselves in falsehood. Nay rather, they shew pride in their falsehood; because they set themselves up against the truth, which they abandon. For he, who states of himself good qualities, which are true, when necessity compels, the more closely is united to humility, the more he adheres also to truth. Was not Paul humble, when from zeal for the truth against false Apostles, he related to his disciples so many bold deeds concerning himself? For he would doubtless be an enemy of truth, if, by concealing his own good qualities, he had allowed the preachers of errors to gain strength.

But because proud men, in that they haughtily examine the sayings of the righteous, consider rather the surface of the words, than the order of the matters, Eliu believed that the sentiments of blessed Job had not sounded of discipline. But since the asperity of haughty men extends sometimes as far as to the severity of cursing, he immediately, as if speaking to God, subjoins against blessed Job,

Ver. 36. *My Father, let Job be tried even to the end.*

vi. 6. Lo! how he lifts up even in words of cursing, that which he had before conceived of the swellings of arrogance. But he would perhaps wish for the force of a merciful probation, if he had believed that he had stood firm in probation. In order then that the malice of his cruelty may openly appear, he prays, that he may still be tried by scourges, who he complains had already fallen during his scourges. He first stated what he thought, in order that what he wished might be more plainly understood. He requires him to be still smitten, whom he accuses of having sinned already under the hand of the Smiter. These are wishes peculiar to the haughty, to pray that the lives of those who are suffering may be more severely examined, because the more just they are in their own eyes, the more hardened are they in others' sufferings. For they know not how to take to them the feeling of the other's infirmity, and to feel pity for their neighbour's weakness, as they do for their

own. For since they think highly of themselves, they do not at all condescend to the humble. Eliu believed that blessed Job had been smitten for his sin, and therefore believed that no bowels of compassion were to be shewn to him, even in the midst of so many sorrows. But when men, who are truly holy, behold any one smitten, even for his faults, though they reprove some of his inordinate doings, yet they sympathize with some of his sufferings; and they are so skilled in keeping down swellings, as yet to know how to relieve wounds, in order that when their hardnesses are softened, their infirmities may be strengthened. But because, on the other hand, haughty men have no bowels of love, they not only do not sympathize with the righteous when suffering, but moreover afflict them, under pretence of proper reproof, and they either exaggerate trifling faults, if there are any in them, or pervert by wrong construction those points which are really good. Book XXVI.

7. Although even holy teachers are frequently wont to exaggerate the vices of offenders, and from some outward signs to dive into secret faults, in order from the smallest defects to discover greater. Whence it is said to Ezekiel, *Son of man, dig in the wall.* Where he presently subjoined, *And when I had digged in the wall, there appeared a door; and He said unto me, Go in, and see the most wicked abominations that they do here. And I went in and saw, and behold every likeness of creeping things, and the abominations of animals, and all the idols of the house of Israel, were painted on the wall.* For by Ezekiel is represented the person of rulers; by the wall the hardness of subjects. And what is the digging into the wall, except laying bare hardness of heart by sharp reproofs? For when he had dug into it, there appeared a door; because when hardness of heart is opened by sharp reproofs, a kind of door appears, through which all the secret thoughts of the person, who is reproved, can be seen. Whence it also well follows in that place, *And He said to me, Go in, and see the most wicked abominations which they do here.* A person enters as it were to behold abominations, who on examining certain signs which appear outwardly, so penetrates the hearts of those under him, that all their unlawful thoughts are made Ez. 8, 8—10.

Job 34, 36. plain to him. Whence he added, *And I went in and saw; and behold every likeness of creeping things, and the abomination of animals.* By reptiles are especially understood worldly thoughts: but by animals, those which rise a little above the earth, but still seek for the rewards of an earthly recompense. For reptiles cling to the earth with the whole of their body, but though animals are in their belly suspended from the earth, yet they are by the appetite of gluttony ever bending to the earth. Reptiles therefore are within the wall, when thoughts which are never elevated from worldly desires, are revolved in the mind. Animals also are within the wall, when if any just and becoming thoughts are conceived, they subserve the pursuit of worldly gains and honours, and of themselves indeed they are already suspended, as it were, from the earth, but by their ambition, they still bring themselves down to the basest objects, as by gluttonous desire. Whence it is also well subjoined, *And all the idols of the house of Israel were painted on the wall.*

Col. 3,5. For it is written, *And covetousness which is idolatry.* After the animals, therefore, the idols are properly described, because, though they arise themselves, as it were, from the earth by becoming conduct, yet they bring themselves down to the earth again by dishonourable ambition. But it is well said, *Were painted;* because while the appearances of outward objects are drawn inward, whatever is thought in imagination is painted, as it were, on the heart.

8. We must therefore observe, that first a hole, and afterwards a door, is seen in the wall: and that then at last the secret abomination is laid open: because, doubtless, the signs of every sin are first observed without, next the door of detected iniquity is laid open; and then at last all the evil is disclosed, which is lurking within. Therefore even holy teachers are wont to examine severely into minute points, in order to arrive at greater hidden faults, from outer faults at the very surface. They utter words of sharp reproof, in order to root out the thorns of deadly thought, and when they act thus, they rage with the love of charity, and are not puffed up with the swelling of pride. For they are ready to die for those, whom they afflict as if raging even to the death. In their thoughts they retain this affection, while

they assume persecution in appearance. They insinuate sound truths in their preaching, they announce and warn against evils, and do not as Eliu pray for, and desire them. They are sometimes so prompt in reproof against those committed to their care, as though they had nothing of calmness: but are so tranquil in affection, as though no warmth could kindle them. For they greatly fear, that if they should cease to reprove the wicked, they would be punished themselves for their damnation. And when warmed into words of reproof, they unwillingly have recourse to them, but yet prepare them, as a defence for themselves, before their strict Judge.

9. Whence it is said again also to the same Ezekiel, *Son of man, take thee a brick, and thou shalt place it before thee, and thou shalt describe on it the city Jerusalem, and thou shalt build munitions, and heap up a mound, and set a camp against it, and place battering rams around it. And take thou an iron pan, and thou shalt place it as an iron wall between thee and the city.* For whom does Ezekiel represent, but rulers? And to him it is said, *Take thee a brick, and thou shalt place it before thee, and thou shalt describe on it the city Jerusalem.* For holy teachers take to themselves a brick, when they lay hold of the earthly heart of hearers, in order to instruct it. And they place this brick before them, because they guard it with the entire attention of their anxiety. And they are ordered also to describe the city Jerusalem thereon, because they earnestly endeavour in their preaching to shew to earthly hearts, how great is the vision of heavenly peace. And it is well said to him also, *And thou shalt set in array the siege against it, and thou shalt build munitions.* For holy teachers set the siege in array against the brick, on which the city Jerusalem is described, when they shew to an earthly mind, now seeking after its heavenly country, what an opposition of sins assails it in the season of this life. For when it is pointed out, how each separate sin lays ambush against the mind, the siege is set, as it were, against Jerusalem by the voice of the preacher. But because they suggest not only how sins lay wait and assault the mind, but also how virtues, when guarded, strengthen it, it is rightly subjoined, *And thou* Ezek. 4, 1—3.

Job 34, 36. *shalt build munitions.* For a holy preacher builds muuitions, when he ceases not to teach what virtues oppose what vices. And because the contests of temptation frequently become stronger as virtues increase, it is still rightly added, *And thou shalt heap up a mound, and set a camp against it, and place battering rams around it.* For every preacher raises up a mound, when he points out the mass of increasing temptation. And he raises a camp against Jerusalem, when he points out to the right disposition of his hearers the circumventions of the crafty enemy, as snares which are beyond their understanding. And he places battering rams around, when he makes known the stings of temptations which surround us on every side in this life, and pierce through the wall of virtues.

10. Where it is well added, *And take thee an iron pan, and thou shalt place it as an iron wall between thee and the city.* For, by the pan is set forth parching, and by the iron, strength. But what so parches and tortures the mind of a ruler and teacher as zeal for the Lord? Whence also Paul was burned by the parching of this pan, when saying, 2 Cor. 11, 29. *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* And because whoever is kindled with a zeal for God against sinners, is constantly protected by a strong guard within, in order that he may not be condemned for neglecting his charge of preaching and ruling, it is well said, *Thou shalt place it as an iron wall between thee and the city.* For the iron pan is placed as an iron wall between the Prophet and the city, because when teachers now display a resolute zeal, they hold afterwards the same zeal, as a strong bulwark, between themselves and their hearers; that they may not then be given up to punishment, if they have been now negligent in reproof. The same Prophet heard that he was to hold this pan between himself and his hearers, Ez.3,19. when the voice of God addressed him before, saying, *If thou hast announced to the wicked, and he have turned not from his wickedness, and from his evil way, he himself shall die in his wickedness, but thou hast delivered thy soul.* Paul had placed this pan, as a wall between himself and his Acts 20, 26. 27. disciples, when saying, *I am pure from the blood of all of you: for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole*

counsel of God. It is, therefore, neeessary that teachers should seek to be burned up now with ardent zeal, that they may not be eompelled to suffer torments in the fire of hell for the sloth of negligence. Book XXVI.

11. But we owe one duty to those who are unrighteous and subject to us, and another to those who are righteous and not subject to us. For fear should enkindle us to reprove those, and to take good eare of the accounts we have to render. But the thought of equity should ineline us to reverence these. But haughty men, beeause they know not this kind of discretion, exhibit the same conduct to those who are righteous, and not subjeet to them, as they see good preachers display towards those who are unrighteous, and subject to them. And when they unjustly launch out into warmth of inveetive, they venture even on words of malediction. For, because they do not love their neighbours as themselves, they cease not to wish for their neighbours that, which they are afraid of befalling themselves. Whence Eliu, venting his secret hatred in open malediction, exelaims, *O my Father, let Job be tried even to the end, cease not from the man of iniquity.* He calls him a man of iniquity, whom God, by a testimony from on high, pronounces righteous above all men. And because many things are still subjoined, from this want of discrimination, I think that they must be run through briefly. For sayings, which are wanting in weight, do not require any careful exposition. It follows,

Ver. 37. *Who hath added blasphemy upon his sins.*

12. He accuses him of having deserved scourges for his sins, and of having sinned after the scourges. But the Lord judges far otherwise, Who both asserts that he was scourged without reason, and conferred on him double goods, after his scourges. Blessed Job, then, is proved to have spoken without sin, whom rewards follow after his speech. Because, therefore, Eliu, when speaking in the Lord's defence, thinks of blessed Job differently from the Lord, he is at variance with the truth, while multiplying, as it were, his words in behalf of the truth. It follows, vii.

Let him be bound meanwhile amongst us, and then let him provoke God to judgment with his words.

13. As though he were saying, Let him know from our viii.

Job 35, 1. 2. assertion, that he is by no means able to bear the examination of God. And, because haughty men strive to say not only foolish, but also many, things, the verse which follows is frequently well introduced respecting him.

Chap. xxxv. Ver. 1. *Eliu therefore spake these words again.*

ix. 14. Every one, who says many things, is anxious to be always beginning, in his speech, in order, by this very beginning, to keep his hearers in suspense, so that they may be the more attentively silent, the more they expect, as it were, to hear some new thing. But Eliu, finishing one subject, begins another without delay, in order that his loquacity may be continued without limit, by beginnings being constantly joined on. It follows,

Ver. 2. *Doth thy thought seem right to thee, that thou saidst, I am more righteous than God.*

x. 15. Every one observes, who reads the text of the history, that blessed Job did not say that he was more righteous than God. But he says, *Let Him put forth equity against me, and my judgment shall come to victory.* Examining namely his life, and not knowing the reasons of his smiting, as has been often observed, he believed that he was scourged for the sake of washing away his sins, and not of increasing his merits. And he was therefore confident, that his judgment would come to victory, because he found in himself no fault, for which he deserved to be smitten. Which thing indeed the Lord also said of him to the devil; *Thou hast moved Me against him, to afflict him without cause.* What had he sinned then, by speaking thus, who, unknowingly, agreed, in these words, with the divine and secret sentence upon himself? Or what harm is there, if, in the judgment of men, our words differ, on the surface, from the exactness of truth, when, in that on which they turn in the heart, they are closely joined to, and agree with, it. The ears of men consider our words to be such as they sound outwardly, but the divine judgments hear them as they are uttered from our inmost heart. Among men, our heart is judged of from our words, but with God, our words are judged of from our heart. Whilst blessed Job, then said without, that, which God said within, he justly uttered every thing which he

Job 23, 7. Vulg.

Job 2, 3.

cordis cardine

said, inasmuch as he, piously, did not differ from the Inner sentence. Although in that which he said, filled by the spirit of Prophecy, *Let Him put forth Equity against me, and my judgment shall come to victory*, he might be looking for the presence of our Redeemer. For He, Who is the Virtue and the Wisdom of the Father, may be, not improperly, considered as His Equity. Whence it is written, *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification.* And because, namely, God has placed this Equity against sinners who fly from Him, by exhibiting It Incarnate, He recalled them at once from their iniquity; and, in that judgment in which it found the Equity of God opposing its ways, mankind has overcome its ancient opponent. It follows, Book XXVI. 1 Cor. 1, 30.

Ver. 3. *For thou saidst, that which is right doth not please thee, or what will it profit thee, if I shall have sinned.*

16. If the whole course of the book is attended to, blessed Job is proved to have said none of these things. But haughty men, as we have also said before, are wont to have this peculiarity, that while they go on in violent invective, they also speak falsely in their inveighing, and that, when they cannot justly blame the things which exist, they reprehend, in their falsehood, those which do not exist. It follows, xi.

Ver. 4. *I will therefore answer thy words, and thy friends with thee.*

In his former saying, he mentioned culpable words, as if those of blessed Job, and derived from them matter for his remarks. But, in the words which follow, he examines, with great acuteness, that, which he craftily invented as matter to speak upon. And the sentiments which follow are powerful, but are not applicable to the character of blessed Job; and the shafts of this reproof strike him the less, the more unjustly they are launched against him. It follows,

Ver. 5—7. *Look unto the heaven, and see, and behold the sky, that it is higher than thou. If thou hast sinned, what will thou hurt Him? If thine iniquities have been multiplied, what will thou do against Him? If, moreover, thou hast acted justly, what will thou give Him, or what will He receive of thy hand?*

Job 35, 5—8. xii. 17. Although these words ought not to have been said to blessed Job, who knew greater truths, yet the things, which are said, are true, namely, that neither do our sins hurt God, nor our good deeds assist Him. Whence he followed, and added, (ver. 8.) *Thine iniquity will hurt a man that is like thee, and thy righteousness will profit the son of man.* But amongst these things we must carefully notice that which he says, *Look into the heavens, and see, and behold the sky, that it is higher than thou.* For from speaking in this way he doubtless signifies, that Job should consider, how much less he could either benefit, or injure, God by his conduct, since he could neither benefit, nor injure, the loftiness of the heaven, or of the sky. For although we can understand by the heaven, or the sky, the heavenly powers, who are ever steadily gazing on the sight of the Godhead, (in order that, when we behold that the angelic spirits are still far distant from us, we may acknowledge how far we are distant below, from the Creator and Lord of spirits Himself,) yet nothing prevents our understanding by them in this place the material substance of heaven and sky. For if we look attentively at outward things, we are recalled by their very means to inward things. For the wonderful works of the visible creation, are the footsteps of our Creator. For we cannot as yet behold Him Himself; but we are yet tending to a sight of Him, if we admire Him in these things which He has made. We call, therefore, the creation His footsteps, because we journey onwards towards Him by following up those things which proceed from Him. Whence Paul says, *The invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.* Whence also it is written in the Book of Wisdom, *For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures the Maker of them can be intelligently seen.* For to our mind, which is through sin scattered abroad, God is not as yet made known within, as He really is. But while He sets before us from without the beauty of His creation, He gives us, as it were, certain hints, and shews what to follow within. He leads us on wonderfully by these same outward forms to inward things, He intimates with boundless admiration what He is, by shewing us these marvels without, which are not Himself.

Rom. 1, 20.

Wisd. 13, 5.

For hence it is written of Wisdom, *She sheweth herself cheerfully unto them in the ways, and meeteth them in all forethought.* Book XXVI. Wisd. 6, 16.

18. For the works of the creation are, when considered, ways to the Creator. For when we see these things, which are made, we admire the power of their Maker. In these ways we are met by Wisdom, with all forethought, because the power of our Maker is set before us, to be enquired into, in every thing, which appears to have been wonderfully wrought. And wherever the soul turns itself, if it looks attentively, it finds God in the very same objects, through which it forsook Him; and again acknowledges His power, from a consideration of those objects, for the love of which it abandoned Him. And it is recalled, when converted, by those things, by which, when perverted, it fell. For we make efforts to rise on the very spot where we fell, and in rising, we place, as it were, the hand of consideration on the spot, where, falling with the foot of slippery love, we were lying prostrate through neglect. But because we have, by visible things, fallen from invisible, it is right that we should again strive, by visible things, to reach invisible; in order that what was to the soul a fall to the bottom, may be a step in turn to the summit, and that it may rise by the same paces by which it fell: while, as was before said, those objects, rightly considered, recal us to God, which, when improperly chosen, separated us from Him. Eliu, therefore, in order to apply the force of consideration, and to shew from bodily objects, how far higher is God than man, well observed, *Look unto the heaven, and see, and behold the sky, that it is higher than thou.* For we learn from these created and corporeal objects, how far we are distant from the loftiness of our Creator: because, by every thing which we behold, we are warned to be humble; in order that the beauty of the creature, when considered, may be, as it were, a kind of lesson to our mind. Let him say then, *Look unto the heaven, and see, and behold the sky, that it is higher than thou. If thou hast sinned, in what wilt thou hurt Him? If thine iniquities have been multiplied, what wilt thou do against Him? If, moreover, thou hast acted justly, what wilt thou give Him, or what will He receive of thy hand?* As if he were saying, Understand from

Job 35, 8. the very creatures, which thou seest by thy bodily senses, to be higher than thyself, how far thou art removed from the loftiness of the Divine Power, and conclude, from this thy consideration, that thou canst neither benefit God by thy good living, nor, again, injure Him by thy evil deeds.

19. But if, as we before said, we understand the superior Powers by 'heaven,' or the 'sky,' Elin, in these words, warns us to consider, that, because the angelic spirits themselves cannot fully contemplate the power of our Creator, (though it is certain that they are higher than ourselves, as not having fallen into the lowest depths,) we should hence infer, how far we are inferior to God, who are beneath even those sublime creatures, who are yet far His inferiors. As if he were to say, Lo! how widely thou art separated from the loftiness of the Godhead, from Whose might even those powers shrink in their humility, who surpass thee with immeasurable loftiness; and how far inferior thou art to the Most High, who discernest that thou art inferior to those, who are inferior to Him. But, by pointing out the highest objects, he brings to an equality, and says,

Ver. 8. *Thine iniquity will hurt a man, who is like thee, and thy righteousness will profit the son of man.*

xiii. 20. The iniquity of man hurts him, whom it pollutes by perversion. And, again, our righteousness profits him, whom it converts from his wickedness. For those things cannot either hurt, or profit, which cannot either corrupt from what is good, or change from what is evil. The powers above, then, cannot be either hurt, or profited, because they have already received to be free from change. But they who are involved in earthly desires, cannot consider these things. For it is difficult for minds, which are scattered abroad, to return to themselves; because evil ways detain them, more pleasurably, when once ensnared, the more every thing, which pleases them, is therein permitted. For no wall of discipline stands in the way to confine them, no punishment of retribution is looked forward to, to frighten them. But, when the eyes of the heart are closed, the soul is plunged the more surely into the lowest abyss, as it is shut out from the highest objects, and commits temporal sins more fearlessly, the more obstinately it despairs of eternal blessings.

21. But that wickedness of the reprobate, separating the life of the Elect, as corn from the chaff in threshing, oppresses, that it may purify. For the wicked, whilst they afflict the good, release them the more from the desires of this world; because, while they heap on them many cruelties here, they compel them to hasten heavenwards. Which is well signified by the Jewish people, when Moses was summoning, and king Pharaoh raging against, them. For Moses was then sent to call them, when Pharaoh had been already urged to oppress them by hard labours: in order that the one, while summoning, might draw away, as it were, the minds of the Israelites disgracefully clinging to Egypt, and the other might urge them on, as it were, while raging: and that the people, which was disgracefully held in bondage, might be moved, either by being invited by blessings, or driven by sufferings. This occurs daily, while the reprobate are allowed to rage against the Elect, when heavenly rewards have been announced to them; in order, that, if we neglect to go forth, when called, to the land of promise, we may be compelled at least by raging oppressions; and, that this Egypt, that is, our present life, which oppressed us, when flattering, may aid, when pressing, us: and that, that which, when cherishing, crushed us with the yoke of bondage, may shew the way of liberty, while it tortures. This is the special reason, why the righteous are allowed to be afflicted by the wicked, in order, namely, that while they hear of future blessings to desire, they may also suffer present evils to shudder at; and that, while love invites, torture may drive them to an easier escape. Whence Eliu, going on to speak of the same sufferings of the Elect, under the oppressions of the reprobate, says,

Book XXVI.

Ex.16,3.

Ver. 9. *They will cry out, by reason of the multitude of oppressors*[1], *and will wail on account of the force of the arm of tyrants.*

[1] *calumniatores. wrongful claimants.*

22. We can rightly term all the ungodly 'oppressors,' not those only, who spoil our outward goods, but those, also, who endeavour by their wicked habits, and by the example of their reprobate life, to scatter our inward treasures. For those go about to attack the things, which are without us, but these seek to prey on us within. The one cease not to

xiv.

Job 35, 9. rage with love for our goods, the other with hatred of our virtues. The one envy what we possess, the others the way we live. The one desire to spoil our outward goods, because they like them, the others are busy in squandering our inward goods, because they dislike them. As the life, then, of our habits is superior to the substance of our goods, he is the greater oppressor, who assaults our virtues, by wicked conduct, than he who injures our goods, by violently oppressing us. For though he has withdrawn nothing from our support, yet he has set before us examples of perdition. He has inflicted on us, therefore, a heavier oppression, since he has roused our heart, when quiet, by temptation. And though he has not persuaded us to the works of his conduct, he has yet imposed on us a contest of temptation. We suffer therefore a heavy oppression from his life, because, doubtless, we suffer that within, which we must overcome with difficulty. And because the life of the wicked abounds in this world, to torture us, it is well said, *They will cry out by reason of the multitude of the oppressors.*

23. But because they sometimes endeavour to extort even by unrestrained violence, that which they cannot persuade by words, it is rightly subjoined, *And will wail on account of the force of the arm of tyrants.* For whoever compels us, by his example, to live wickedly, uses in our case, as yet, the voice of the oppressor. But whoever desires to frighten us also, when persuading us to sin, now rages against us with the arm of tyranny. For, to recommend vices by one's conduct, is one thing, to enforce it by terrors, is another. When we look then at patterns of evil doing, we hear, thus far, as it were, the noise of the oppressor; but when we are by force compelled to sin, we endure at once a tyrant in our heart.

[1] vi cogimur

24. But the minds of the strong, which are stedfastly fixed in God, despise all these assaults, the more they discern that they rise up against the commands of their Creator. For waiting for the rewards of eternity, they gain strength from their adversities, because, as the fight grows strong, they doubt not that a more glorious victory awaits them. Thus while the desires of the Elect are kept down, they make progress by adversity, just as the fire is blown back by

the blast, in order to increase, and gains strength by the means, by which it appears to be extinguished. For we shew in this way, with what great desire for God we are inflamed, if we pass over to Him, not merely by tranquil and smooth, but even through rugged and hard paths. For hence the Prophet says, *Who hath made my feet like harts' feet.* For, when a hart climbs mountain ridges, it passes over, with a bound, whatever rugged places it beholds, whatever spots, entangled with briars, oppose themselves, and rises up to higher ground, without any obstacle to its course. So also the minds of the Elect leap over, with the bound of contemplation, whatever they see obstructing, or opposing them in this world, and, despising the thorns of worldly anxieties, raise themselves, like hinds, to things above. Hence he says again, *And by my God, I shall pass over a wall.* For 'a wall' is every thing thrown in our way, that we pass not over to Him, Whom we love. But we pass over a wall, when we trample down, for love of our heavenly country, whatever things have, in this world, been placed in our way. Hence the Lord says, by the same Prophet, to a struggling soul; *I heard thee in the hidden place of the tempest, I proved thee at the waters of contradiction.* For it is 'the hidden place of the tempest,' when the waves of tempting thoughts swell up in the contrite heart, when the tumults of worldly cares dash themselves against the zeal of holy love. He is heard, then, in the hidden place of the tempest, because this very agitation of tribulation, is the cry of suppliants. But, because there are never entirely wanting such, as endeavour to advise evil to those who are seeking for good, the waters of contradiction are opposing people. And because our desire is then proved, when it is opposed by any adversity, it is rightly said, *I have proved thee at the waters of contradiction.* By these efforts of virtues, then, the strong make progress, from adversity: but the weak, if any obstacles have been placed against them, often languish in their desires, and, when assaulted by mighty tribulation, fail from cowardice. Whence Eliu, inflicting on blessed Job reproaches for his cowardice, having first mentioned the oppressions of the wicked, proceeds immediately to speak of the cowardice of the weak, saying,

Ps. 18, 33.

Ps. 18, 29.

Ps. 81, 7.

Job 35, 10. Ver. 10. *And He said not, Where is God, Who made me?*

xv. 25. It is the practice of Holy Scripture, to pass suddenly from the singular to the plural, and to turn itself from the plural to the singular. Whence Eliu, when saying, *They will cry and wail*, did not subjoin, *They said not, Where is God?* but, *He said not, Where is God?* For, coming from the plural to the singular, he suddenly passed over to the person of each of the weak. Perhaps because that is better discerned by individuals, which is heard spoken of them individually: so that each of them returns to his own heart, and blames in himself that, which is stated of each man one by one. He, therefore, retained the singular number, saying, *He said not, Where is God, Who hath made me?* For, whoever is crushed by the tribulation of adversities, does not look at Him, by Whom He was made. For He, Who made that, which was not, leaves it not, when made, without guidance: and He Who made man mercifully, does not permit him to be tormented unjustly. Nor does He carelessly suffer that, which is, to perish, Who also created that which was not, that it might be. When we ask, then, the cause of our tribulation, and perhaps too slowly discover it; there is this consideration, we can suffer nothing unjustly, because if, God being our Creator, we exist, who before were not, God being our Ruler, we, who are, are not unjustly afflicted. It follows,

Who hath given songs in the night.

xvi. 26. A 'song in the night' is joy in tribulation; because, though afflicted with worldly oppressions, we yet now rejoice in the hope of eternity. Paul was announcing songs in the night, saying, *Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation.* David had taken up his song in the night, who was saying, *Thou art my hope from the oppression which hath surrounded me, my Exultation, deliver me from those who surround me.* Lo! he calls oppression 'night,' and yet amidst his straitnesses, he calls his Deliverer, his Exultation. There was 'night' indeed without, in the encompassing of oppressions, but 'songs' were resounding within, from the consolation of joy. For, because we cannot return to eternal joys, except through temporal losses, it is the whole object of

Rom. 12, 12.

Ps. 32, 7.

Scripture, that the hope of the joys, which will abide, should strengthen us, amid these passing adversities. Whence also the Prophet Ezekiel witnesses, that he had receeived a book, in which were written, *lamentations, a song, and woe.* For what is signified by this 'book,' except the words of God? For since they enjoin on us tears and sorrow, lamentations are said to be written therein. They contain also a song and woe; for they so set forth joy from hope, as yet to announce oppression and difficulties in this present life. They contain a song and woe, because though we seek for what is sweet there, it is yet first necessary for us to endure bitternesses here. The Lord was preaching a song and woe to His disciples, when He was saying, *These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation.* As though He were plainly saying, May you have an inward refreshment and consolation from Me, because cruel and heavy oppression will befal you from the world without. Because then, every feeble person, when oppressed, has, by reason of his great weakness of heart, but faint hope of joy, and, when suffering adversities without, forgets that, in which he used to rejoice within, it is well said, *He said not, Where is God Who made me, Who hath given songs in the night?* For, were he to say these words, he would moderate the violence which he suffers, and, by the lasting good he was seeking within, would consider, that the transitory pain he endures, is not intolerable. It follows,

Book XXVI.

Ezek. 2, 10.

John 16, 33.

Ver. 11. *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and instructeth us more than the fowls of heaven.*

27. The beasts of the earth are they, who seek the lowest things, from the habit of a carnal life. But the fowls of the heaven are they, who search into lofty things, with the eagerness of a proud curiosity. These degrade themselves, by their conduct, below what they are in themselves; these exalt themselves, by their enquiries, beyond what they are able. The pleasure of the flesh casts down those to the very bottom, the lust of curiosity exalts these, as it were, in things above them. To those it is said by holy Scripture, *Be ye not as the horse, and the mule, which have no understanding.* The proud labour of these is blamed, when it is said,

xvii.

Ps. 32, 9.

Job 35, 11. *Seek not out the things that are higher than thou, neither search the things that are above thy strength.* To those it is said, *Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, lust, evil concupiscence.* To these it is said, *Let no man deceive you through philosophy and vain deceit.* God teaches us, therefore, more than the beasts and the fowls of the air, because, while we understand what we are, neither does the infirmity of the flesh cast us down, nor does the spirit of pride raise us up. We do not, by sinking down, fall beneath the lowest things, nor are we puffed up, by pride, as to those above us. For he, who falls in the flesh, is overcome by the appetite of beasts, but he, who is exalted in mind, is raised up, like the fowls, as if with the wing of lightness.

Ecclus. 3, 21. Col. 3, 5. Col. 2, 8.

28. But if we keep strict watch, that both humility of mind and chastity of body be preserved, we soon know that the one is preserved by the other. For pride has often been to many a seed-plot of lust; for, whilst their spirit raised them, as it were, on high, their flesh plunged them in the lowest depths. For they are first secretly raised up, but afterwards they fall openly; for while they swell in the secret motions of the heart, they fall with open lapses of the body. Thus, thus, elated, they required to be smitten with righteous retribution; in order that, since they set themselves above men by pride, they might be brought down, by their lust, even to a resemblance of beasts. For, *man when he was in honour, understood not, he hath been compared to the senseless beasts, and made like them.* For the wing of knowledge had raised them, as it were, on high, of whom Paul said that which we before mentioned; *Because, when they had known God, they glorified Him not as God, or gave Him thanks, but became vain in their thoughts.* But how they fell into bestial and more than bestial pleasure, he added, saying, *God gave them up to the desires of their hearts, unto uncleanness.* Lo! the flesh overwhelmed those, whom boastful learning had raised up, and, from the flying of birds, they fell beyond the appetite of beasts, and sank beneath themselves, by the very means by which they appeared to rise above themselves. We must take heed then, and the mind must be kept, with all care, from the swelling of pride. For

Ps. 49, 20.

Rom. 1, 21.

ib. 24.

our thoughts fly not in vain, before the eyes of God; and no moments of time pass in thought, without an abiding of retribution. God then beholds what elates the mind within; and therefore permits that which is to bring it down to gain strength without. That which is afterwards to be struck down without by the pollution of lust, is first raised up within us. Open punishment, namely, follows a secret fault, in order that our inward evils may be punished, by those from without, and that the heart, which was secretly puffed up, may fall openly. For hence it is said by Hosea, against the Israelites, *The spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known the Lord.* Who, in order to shew that the cause of lust sprung from the sin of pride, proceeded to say, *And the pride of Israel will answer to his face.* As if he were saying, The sin, which through pride of mind lurked in secret, openly replied by the lust of the flesh. Wherefore the cleanness of chastity is to be preserved, by guarding humility. For, if the spirit is piously humbled before God, the flesh is not raised unlawfully above the spirit. For, the spirit holds the dominion over the flesh, committed to it, if it acknowledges the claims of lawful servitude to the Lord. For if, through pride, it despises its Author, it justly takes on itself a contest with its subject flesh. Whence also that first disobedient one, as soon as he had sinned through pride, covered his shameful parts. For, because his spirit had put an insult on God, it soon experienced the insult of the flesh. And, because it refused to submit to its Creator, it lost its right over the subject flesh, which it used to rule: in order, namely, that the confusion of its own disobedience might redound upon itself, and that it might learn, when vanquished, what it had lost through pride.

Hos. 5, 4.

ib. 5.

Gen. 3, 7.

29. Let no one, then, after he has begun to aim at things above him, consider, if overcome by carnal pleasure, that he is only then defeated, when he is openly overpowered. For, if the poison of lust frequently springs from the root of pride, the flesh then triumphed, when the spirit was secretly proud. The soul then fell, as to the beginning of its fault, into the wantonness of beasts, when, by raising itself, like the fowls, it soared higher than it ought. For it is hence, that long-maintained

Job 35, 11. continence is suddenly broken through, hence, that virginity, though preserved even to old age, is frequently violated. For, since humility of heart is neglected, the righteous Judge despises even chastity of body, and at last proclaims, by an open sin, those to be reprobates, whom He endured in secret, though long ago rejected. For he, who has suddenly lost a long-treasured good, has retained, in himself within, another evil, from which a further evil has suddenly burst forth, by which he was, even then, estranged from God, though he shewed that he cleaved to Him by cleanness of body. Because, therefore, pride of mind leads to the pollution of the flesh, the heart of the reprobate is, from the flight of birds, plunged into the wantonness of beasts. But holy men, that they may not be carried down into the whirlpool of lust, through bestial appetite, carefully guard the thoughts of their mind from the flight of pride; and, that they may not sink, through folly, into the lowest depths, humbly keep down all their high notions. It is therefore rightly said, *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and instructeth us more than the fowls of heaven.* Thou understandest, 'this he also said not.'

30. He says, therefore, that he does not remember in tribulation, that he is superior to the beasts, and to the fowls. As if he were to say, Every one who is weak, does not strengthen himself when in perturbation, because he does not moderate himself, when in tranquillity; and he therefore knows not how to endure adversities, because, when prosperous, he knew not how to keep himself down in thought from the flight of birds, nor to raise up the motions of his flesh from the gluttony of beasts. But this was the more unfitly said to blessed Job, as his life is wonderfully kept in the mean, between things high and low. But it can also be understood in another way; *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and instructeth us more than the fowls of heaven.* For as the life of men, still subject to the motions of the flesh, is signified by the word 'beasts;' so is the pride of haughty spirits set forth by the appellation 'fowls;' in order that earthly men may be designated by 'beasts,' but the devils by 'fowls.' Whence, when the Lord said that the

seeds had fallen by the way side, He adds, *The fowls of the air came and devoured them up;* signifying doubtless by fowls, the powers of the air. Book XXVI. Mat. 13, 4.

31. But beeause holy persons neither follow the lowest examples of men, nor, again, are deeeived by the subtlety of devils, they rise, by the virtue of their instruction, both above the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of heaven. For they are taught more than the beasts of the earth, because they despise whatever ean be desired below: and they are instrueted more than the fowls of the air, beeause they understand all the stratagems of unelean spirits. They are taught above the beasts of the earth, because they seek not any thing, which passes away in this life. They are instructed more than the fowls of the air, becanse they trample down even now, by the merits of their life, the powers of the air, which they still tolerate through the infirmity of the flesh. Paul had been already taught above the beasts of the earth, when saying, *For many walk;* and shortly afterwards, *Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, who savour of earthly things. But our conversation is in heaven.* And again he knew that he was instructed above the fowls of the air, when he said, *Know ye not that we shall judge angels?* He pereeived that the beasts were beneath him, beeause, namely, though still dwelling on earth, he was trampling down the habits of men, who engage in grovelling pursuits. And again he had surpassed the flying of fowls, by the dignity of his merits, beeause, when now about to enter heaven, he was not ignorant that he would judge Angels. In the one he was treading under the basenesses of the impure, in the other the loftinesses of the proud. For the minds of holy men despise all transitory objects, and behold every thing that is proud, and every thing that passes away, sink beneath them. And plaeed on a lofty eminence, they see all things the more subject to them, the more truly they submit themselves to the Author of all; and they transcend all things, just as they prostrate themselves in true humility before the Creator of all things. Let him say then, *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and instructeth us more than the fowls of the heaven.* As if he were saying, The weak man, overeome by his eowardice, said not thus,

Phil. 3, 18. 19. 20.

1 Cor. 6, 3.

Job 35, 12. and therefore the adversity of temptation smote him: because in the season of tranquillity he did not overcome all these transitory objects, by any perfection. For he would not dread the adversities of this life, if he had trampled even its prosperity under foot, by the merit of his perfection. It follows,

Ver. 12. *There they will cry, and He will not hear, because of the pride of evil men.*

xviii. 32. There; namely, in tribulation: as it is written on the Ps. 102, 28. other hand of joy, *The children of thy servants shall inhabit there.* But it seems doubtful whether he says, Because of the pride of evil men He will not hear, or, they will cry because of the pride of evil men. But it can be better understood, if they are rather said not to be heard, than to cry out, because of the pride of evil men. For, that they cry out, because of the pride of evil men, is already stated, ver. 9. in the verse in which it is said, *They will cry out by reason of the multitude of the violent.* Something is therefore suggested to us in this verse, to be attended to a little more minutely. Because often, when the oppressed have cried out, they deserve indeed to be heard, for their own sake; but yet their desires are deferred, on account of the pride of their oppressors. For the Just God allows His own people to be oppressed in their worldly goods, and the malice of the violent sinfully to increase; in order that, while the life of these is wasted away in purification, the wickedness of those may be consummated. But it frequently happens, that the righteous, when involved in tribulation, enjoy, even in this life, heavenly consolation, which they do not ask for in this life. For they wish to be saved not for their own sakes, but for the salvation of their adversaries; in order that, while Almighty God delivers them, by working a kind of miracle, from their boundless dangers, He may manifest His might, even to their persecutors; and may deliver the adversaries for eternity, by the same means, as He rescues His own people in this world. As the Prophet also, taking up the Ps. 69, 18. language of martyrs, says, *Deliver me, because of mine enemies.* As if he were saying; For myself indeed, I seek not to be delivered from temporal tribulation; but yet I wish to be delivered, on account of my adversaries; in

order that, while my life is seen to be miraculously preserved, the hardness of my enemies may be converted at the very sight of the miracles. As the Lord then frequently rescues the life of His own people, in this world, for the conversion of His enemies, so does He frequently not listen to the cry of His own people, for the sake of the condemnation of their persecutors; in order, namely, that they may add to their guilt, from the fact that they wickedly rejoice that they have prevailed. For they, who despise invisible things, can sometimes be moved by visible miracles. But frequently no visible miracle is worked in behalf of the righteous, because their adversaries do not deserve to be invisibly enlightened. Let it be said then, *There will they cry, and He will not hear, because of the pride of evil men.* As if he were saying, The guilt of the oppressors prevents His hearing the voice of the oppressed: and the righteous are not visibly rescued, because the unrighteous do not deserve to be invisibly saved. Hence it is again said by the Prophet, *When he shall see the wise dying, the simple and the foolish shall perish together.* For those, whom they behold dying visibly, they do not believe can live invisibly, and they add to the guilt of their unbelief, as they despair of eternity, when they behold the death of the faithful. The violent, then, fail the more fatally, from the very fact, that they outwardly prevail against the life of the innocent. And the inmost Truth drives them forth the more from Itself, the more It suffers them to work their will, in this world, against those who are Its own.

Book XXVI.

Ps. 49, 10.

33. Whoever, then, persecutes the life of the good, is then condemned with more fearful vengeance, when he is opposed by no adversity; and he is then exposed to the risk of more fearful wrath, when he prosecutes successfully his sinful desires. Because, namely, the vengeance of the Divine Judgment has given up, by reserving for future punishment, him, whom It has here not cared to oppose in his wickedness. For hence the Lord says by the Prophet, *I gave them up according to the desires of their heart, and they will go on in their own wills.* Hence it is said again, *The rod of God is not upon them.* Hence also it is written of their chief himself, *He will do, and prosper.* Hence again it is said of the same person, *And craft shall be guided aright in*

Ps. 81, 12.

Job 21, 9.

Dan. 8, 12.

ib. 25.

Job 35, 13. *his hand.* For craft is guided aright, in the hand of Antichrist, because he is not hindered by any adversity, in this world, from fulfilling that, which he has purposed against the good. Hence again it is said by Solomon, *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.* It is, then, a manifest token of perdition, when subsequent success favours much-wished for iniquities, and when no obstacle hinders that, which a perverse mind has conceived. For frequently, while the wishes of sinful men are delayed, they are changed, and, while they feel the difficulty of performing an evil action, they learn its guilt; and they, who are thwarted at first against their will, shrink afterwards, of their own accord, from that which they had conceived. Because then the Lord, when He forsakes the wicked, allows them to prevail, and, because the wickedness of the proud is perfected, by the same means, as the long-suffering of the humble is consummated, let it be rightly said, *There will they cry, and He will not hear, because of the pride of wicked men.* It follows,

Prov. 1, 32.

Ver. 13. *For God will not hear without reason, and the Almighty will behold the causes of men one by one.*

xix. 34. We must observe that two points are stated: both that He does not hear without reason[1] him, who cries to Him, and yet regards his sufferings; and pretends not to hear his cry, and still is not ignorant what each one suffers. Let no one, then, who is not speedily heard, believe that he is not cared for by God's providence. For our desires are often heard, because they are not speedily granted: and that, which we wish to be soon fulfilled, is the better prospered by the very delay. Our prayer is frequently made good, the more it is deferred; and when our request is, in appearance, neglected, our wishes are more fully carried out in the depth of our thoughts. As the seeds of harvest are firmly compressed by frost, and spring up in greater number, to bear produce, the slower they come forth to the surface. Our desires, therefore, are deferred, in order that they may make progress; they make progress, in order to gain strength for that which they are about to enjoy: they are exercised in the contest, in order that greater rewards may be heaped on them, in recompense. The labour of the contest is protracted,

[1] or, 'in vain,' (with different punctuation.)

in order that the crown of victory may become greater. When the Lord, then, does not speedily hear His own people, He draws them to Himself, just as He is believed to repel them. For He is, in truth, our spiritual Physician, and cuts out the infection of vices, whose existence within us He utterly reprobates. He extracts the poison of corruption with the knife of tribulation; and the more He pretends not to hear the cries of His patient, the more is He providing for the ending of his sickness. For hence the Prophet exclaims, *O my God, I will cry through the day, and Thou wilt not hear; and in the night, and not to my folly.* As if He were saying, It tends not to my folly, that Thou dost not hear me, when I cry to Thee, day and night, without ceasing; because Thou trainest me the more in heavenly wisdom, by seeming, as it were, to desert me in my temporal affliction. Hence also he says, *A helper in opportunities, in tribulation.* Intending to speak of tribulations, he first mentioned opportunities; because we are frequently bruised by tribulation, and yet it is not a fit season for our being assisted according to our desire for deliverance. Let it be said then, *For God will not hear without reason, and the Almighty will behold the causes of men one by one.* But because some persons are frequently broken down by this very delay of assistance, he fitly subjoins,

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Ps. 22, 2.

Ps. 9, 9.

Ver. 14. *Even when thou shalt say, He doth not consider, judge thyself before Him, and wait for Him.*

35. For perhaps when our cry seems to be disregarded, the hope, which was in our heart, is weakened, and we believe that assistance from above will fail us, because we are too slow in asking: and we lament that the unavenged wrongs we are enduring are almost disregarded by God. But when this storm of despair agitates us, our disordered mind sooner takes shelter in the harbour of hope, if it weighs accurately its causes with the Lord; if it recals to its memory His favours, if it does not artfully excuse in itself the evils it has returned for His goodness; if it balances what it has justly deserved, and what it has received of His mercy; if it actively[1] searches its own conduct; if, examining all its doings in God's sight, it conceals not itself from itself; if it remembers that it was brought into being, which

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[1] vivaciter.

Job 35, 14. before was not; if it reflects that though it was lying in darkness, it was illumined, and raised up. Bringing then all these points together in itself, while it considers the blessings it has received, it blames not the ills it is suffering; and, strengthened with the consolation of so many gifts, it is not crushed with despair. Because, when it calls to mind past mercies, it derives hope for the future. Let him say therefore, *Even when thou shalt say, He doth not consider, judge thyself before Him, and wait for Him.* As though he were to say, When God is believed not to regard, because He is slow in shewing compassion, enter into thy most secret thoughts, and there undertake the judgment of thy cause before His eyes, and discern both what thou hast conferred on Him, by thy conduct, or what thou hast mercifully received. And then thou returnest to the confidence of hope, when thou art ashamed at the mercies of such great goodness: so that thou mayest confidently look for Him in adversities, Whom thou rememberest to have been gracious to thee, even after thine offences. For thou hadst reason to hope for assistance from above, even though no favours had preceded. And thou must feel sure that God does not unjustly reject man, whom He mercifully created.

36. We must consider, therefore, how dangerous it is to behold past gifts, and to despair of future: how dangerous, if in this storm of tribulations, we suffer shipwreck from despair, bound as we are to the harbour of hope by the boundless ties of past favours. Let it then be said rightly, *Judge thyself before Him, and wait for Him.* For he who judges not himself before God, does not wait for Him when afflicted. For he despairs that assistance can hereafter come from Him, Whose preceding kindnesses He does not admit: and when he forgets those that are past, he is deprived also of a bounteous supply of subsequent blessings. But behold, while we are afflicted, while we patiently wait for the grace of consolation, the wicked break out into greater wickedness, and proceed the more in adding to their iniquities, as they are left unpunished. And yet the Almighty mercifully bears with sinners, and grants them time for repentance, which He converts, if they are not converted, into an evidence of greater guilt; He patiently re-

strains the wrath, which at length He pours out irrevocably. Whence it is fitly subjoined, Book XXVI.

Ver. 15. *For He doth not now bring on His fury, nor severely punish wickedness.*

37. For God in truth bears a long while with him, whom He condemns for ever; and forbears now to bring on His wrath, because He reserves it to be poured forth, hereafter, without end. For suffering is here the portion of the Elect, in order to their being trained for the rewards of their heavenly inheritance. It is our portion to receive stripes here, for whom an eternity of joy is reserved. For hence it is written, *He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.* Hence it is said to John, *I rebuke and chasten those whom I love.* Hence Peter says, *It is time, that judgment must begin at the house of God.* Where he immediately adds with astonishment, *But if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that believe not the Gospel of God?* For the severity of God permits not sins to remain unpunished; but the wrath of judgment commences with our punishment here, in order that it may cease to rage at the damnation of the reprobate. Let the reprobate proceed then, and accomplish the desires of their pleasures, with unpunished iniquity: and let them feel no temporal scourges, since eternal punishments await them. But their unpunished wickedness, is well signified by the sin of Ham: to whom it was said by his father, *Cursed be thy son Canaan, a servant shall he be to his brethren.* For Canaan was the son of Ham. And what is signified by his son Canaan receiving the sentence of punishment, when Ham offended? What is meant by his being smitten, not in himself, but in his posterity, except that the sins of the reprobate go on unpunished in this world, but are smitten hereafter? Let it be said then, *For He doth not now bring on His fury, nor severely punish wickedness.* xxi. Heb. 12, 6. Rev. 3, 19. 1 Pet. 4, 17. Gen. 9, 25.

38. But it must be noticed, that he inserted the word "severely;" for, although He patiently endures some wickednesses, yet some He punishes even in this life: and He sometimes begins to smite even here, what He intends to destroy with eternal damnation. Therefore He smites some sins, and leaves some unpunished: for, if He were to be

Job 35, 16. severe with none, who would believe that God regarded the doings of men? And again, if He were to smite all of them here, for what reason would the last judgment still remain? Some are, therefore, smitten, in order that we may tremble at the attentive care of our Ruler over us. But some are still left unpunished, in order that we may feel that judgment still remains. It is well said then, *He doth not severely punish sin:* because while some small portion of iniquity is punished, the sentence of eternal judgment is even now foretasted by unconverted souls.

39. All this then that Elihu says is right, if it were said rightly. For he knows what he ought to say, but knows not to whom he is speaking. For the things which he said are true, but are out of place, in reproving blessed Job; because he the less needed this reproof, as he had not sinned, even from any cowardice. But, because the pride of haughty men is often an occasion of virtues for the righteous, blessed Job is so dealt with in the secret judgment, in order that, after the scourges of punishments, he may gain strength also, by the words of the arrogant. For, lo! the more he is despised by the minister of pride, the more is he comforted by the truth teaching him within. For, after Elihu knew that he had said so many powerful words, he disclosed what pride he bore within, and despised blessed Job, by thinking highly of himself, saying;

Ver. 16. *Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain, he multiplieth words without knowledge.*

xxii. 40. By introducing these words, he doubtless asserts, that blessed Job both knew nothing, and had said much; and, though he introduces his own opinions loquaciously, he accuses him of the fault of loquacity. But this seems also to be a peculiar fault of the arrogant, that they believe the much, which they have said, to be little, and the little, which is said to them, to be much. For, because they always wish to speak their own words, they cannot hear the words of others; they think that they suffer violence, if they do not pour forth their own immoderate opinions more immoderately. And, although blessed Job was silent at his words, yet Elihu finds cause for invective, in the speech, in which he had replied to his friends; in order to get himself larger space

of his silence, and that he himself might answer many things, he asserts that he had multiplied words. For he immediately begins the commencement of a tedious speech, and endeavours to commence, as though he had as yet said nothing at all. Whence it is subjoined,

Chap. xxxvi. Ver. 1, 2. *Eliu also added, and spake thus; Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee.*

41. He had already said much, and hopes that he will be borne with yet a little longer; because, namely, haughty men consider that they suffer a heavy loss, if they confine their skill by speaking within brief limits. For they believe, that they shew themselves to be more learned, the more they have been able to lay open their minds in multiplicity of much speaking. But, because they frequently perceive that the respect of silence is not paid to them, they mention, at times, the power of the Lord, from Whom they seem to be speaking; and, under pretence of Him, they exact that silence for themselves, which they by no means deserve; and, while in appearance they bring God forward, when exacting a hearing for themselves from reverence for Him, they strive more to display themselves, than to set forth His doings. Whence also Eliu subjoins, saying, xxiii.

Ver. 2. *For I have yet somewhat to speak on God's behalf.*

Because holy teachers sometimes frequently repeat any things they state rather obscurely, in order to instil these hidden sayings into the hearts of their hearers, by the language of repetition; haughty men also wish to imitate this practice, and the things they have said they repeat in an insolent manner, not because they seek to insinuate the subjects into the hearts of their hearers, but because they wish to appear eloquent in their judgment. Whence Eliu subjoining, says,

Ver. 3. *I will repeat my knowledge from the beginning.*

But because, on the mention of knowledge, his pride of heart hath displayed itself in his voice, he is plainly discovered to be a haughty person, if he does not quickly conceal himself by some disguise. Whence in concealing his own arrogance, he immediately introduces the righteousness of the Lord, and says,

Job 36, 4. *And I will prove my Maker just.*

In order that, while he speaks as if in behalf of God's righteousness, whatever escapes from him arrogantly, may be excused in the judgment of man. It follows,

Ver. 4. *For truly my words are without falsehood.*

xxiv. 42. Even righteous men, when they see that they cannot be understood by their feeble hearers, are frequently wont to praise the things they say. Not because they are eager for their own praise, but to inflame their hearers with an anxious desire of listening to them; in order that, while they are uttered by their voice, they may be embraced, with more ardent affection, by the hearts of their hearers. Whence Paul, when he had spoken to the Corinthians things wonderful and many, says, *Our mouth is opened unto you, O ye Corinthians, our heart is enlarged.* But haughty men, while they know not the heart of the good, and imitate only their words, from time to time, are hurried forward in praising what they say, not because the listlessness of their hearers displeases them, but because they eagerly please themselves. They imitate and feign the voice of the righteous, but know not the power of their voice. They see what the righteous put forward, but know not what they seek for. For, when holy teachers set forth the praise of their preaching, they raise, as it were, the hearts of their hearers from grovelling thoughts, by the hand of their voice; in order that, having been suddenly roused, they may run, as if to meet the words which follow, and may hold them the more firmly in the embrace of their understanding, the more they had loved them, by the voice of their praiser, even before they beheld them. But, as I said, haughty men know not these things. For since that, which they seek for, is without, they cannot feel what is desirable within. For it is written of the Church of the Elect, *All the glory of her, the daughter of kings, is from within.* And the wise virgins are said to carry oil in their lamps. Whence it is said by the voice of the Saints, *Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience.* But haughty men, because they have no testimony of their conscience before God, seek the testimony of another's voice before men; and, when they slowly obtain it, they burst forth into shameless praise of themselves. For if they find not

2 Cor. 6, 11.

Ps. 45, 13.

Mat. 25, 4.

2 Cor. 1, 12.

the applause of men, which they eagerly look for, they themselves speak in praise of their own wisdom. Whence also Eliu adds, saying, Book XXVI.

And perfect knowledge shall be proved to thee.

43. He doubtless felt that he was about to utter great things, but he could not conceal his lofty estimate of himself, in his swelling heart; and therefore preceded by his praises his sound opinions; because he would be already indeed guilty in God's judgment, if he had merely felt in silence great things of himself. For we are by no means safe, before the searching examination of the Truth, even though we have nothing in ourselves which deserves blame, in the judgment of men. For, frequently, when careless in our thoughts, we are assaulted by the pride, which yet we suppress in silence. But unless our secret pride is extinguished, by awakened repentance, in the chamber of the heart, in which it takes its rise; all the merit of our conduct is extinguished before our strict Judge. We must, therefore, hence consider, with what great punishment that pride will be condemned, which is cherished till it is boldly uttered, if even that is inexcusable which springs up secretly in the heart. We must consider also with what power that pride reigns within, which is so far encouraged, as not to be ashamed even to break forth without. Because then Eliu felt great things, he could not humbly control himself, he maintained the loftiness of knowledge, he spurned the grace of humility. And while following after the gift by which he desired to speak well, he lost the grace by which he might have lived well. *For knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* But let him now state that right thing, which he still knows not how to speak rightly. For, after he had breathed forth the proud thoughts of his mind, in words of pride, he added a noble sentiment, saying, XXV. 1 Cor. 8, 1.

Ver. 5. *God rejecteth not the mighty, though He Himself is mighty.*

44. Some things in the course of this mortal life are hurtful in themselves, some are such from circumstances. Some are hurtful of themselves; as sins and wickednesses. But some things are, now and then, hurtful from circumstances, as temporal power, or the bond of wedlock. For XXVI.

Job 36, 5. marriage is good, but those things which grow up around it, through the care of this world, are evil. Whence Paul says, 1 Cor. 7, 33. *He that is with a wife, thinketh of the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.* Whence also, recommending to certain persons a better course, he dissuades Ib. v. 35. them from marriage, and says, *But this I say, not that I may cast a snare on you, but for that which is comely, and which may give you power to pray to the Lord without impediment.* While that then which is not hurtful is retained, something hurtful is commonly committed from attendant circumstances: as frequently we journey along a straight and clear road, and yet we are entangled by our clothes in briars which grow by its side. We do not stumble in a clear road, but something grows by the side to wound us. For great is that temporal power, which, from being well administered, has its special reward from God: and yet sometimes from being preeminent over others, it swells with pride of thought. And while all things for its use are at its service, while its commands are speedily fulfilled, according to its wish, while all its subjects praise its good deeds, if there are any, but do not oppose its evil doings with any authority, while they too commonly praise, even that which they ought to blame; the mind, being led astray by those things that are beneath it, is raised above itself, and while it is encircled with unbounded applause without, is bereft of truth within. And, forgetting itself, it scatters itself after others' speech, and believes itself to be really such, as it is spoken of without, and not such as it ought to see itself to be within. It despises those beneath it, and does not acknowledge them to be its equals in order of nature, and believes that it has exceeded those also in the merits of its life, whom it has surpassed by the accident of rank. It considers that it is far wiser than all those, than whom it sees itself greater in power. For it places itself in truth on a lofty eminence, in its own opinion, and, he that is confined within the same natural condition as others, scorns to look on them as his equals, and is in this way led even to resemble him, of whom Job 41, 34. it is written, *He beholdeth every high thing, and is a king over all the children of pride;* and of whose body it is said, Prov. 30, 13. *A generation, whose eyes are lofty, and their eyelids are*

raised up on high. It is led to a resemblance of him, who aiming at singular loftiness, and scorning a life in company with angels, says, *I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.* By a marvellous judgment, then, it finds the depth of downfal within, whilst it raises itself without, in loftiness of power. For a man is in truth made like an apostate angel, when he disdains to be like his fellow men. Thus Saul grew up, from meritorious humility, into swelling pride, by his height of power. He was in truth raised up in consequence of his humility, and rejected through his pride: as the Lord bears witness, Who says, *When thou wast little in thine own eyes, did not I make thee the head of the tribes of Israel?* Before he attained to power he had seen that he was little, but supported by temporal authority he no longer saw himself to be so. For preferring himself, in comparison with others, he counted himself great in his own judgment. But marvellously, when little in his own sight, he was great in the sight of the Lord, and when great in his own sight, in the Lord's sight he was little. The Lord forbids us, by His Prophet, to be great in our own sight, saying, *Woe unto you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight.* And Paul admonishes us not to be great in our own opinions, saying, *Be not wise in your own conceits.* While the mind then is puffed up, through the number of those that are subject to it, it falls into the lust of pride, the very height of its power pandering to it.

BOOK XXVI.

Is. 14, 14.

1 Sam. 15, 17.

Is. 5, 21.

Rom. 12, 16.

45. But for this and that not to be good is one thing, for any not to know how to use the good aright is another. For power is good in its proper place, but it requires careful conduct in a ruler. He therefore exercises it aright, who has learned both how to retain, and how to overcome it. He exercises it aright, who knows how to raise himself, by its means, above his faults, and, with it, to keep himself down on a level with others. For the mind of man is frequently elated, even when not supported by any power. How much more then does it exalt itself, when power joins itself unto it? And yet it is prepared to correct the faults of others with due punishment. Whence also it is said by Paul, *For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that*

Rom. 13, 4.

Job 36, 5. *doeth evil.* When then the administration of temporal power is undertaken, a person must watch with the greatest care, in order to learn how to select from it what is of use, and to withstand its temptations, and to feel himself, even with it, on an equality with others, and yet, by his zeal for revenge, to set himself above those who do wrong. We gain a fuller knowledge of this discretion, if we look also at some instances of ecclesiastical power. Peter then, though holding the Chief power[1] in the Church by Divine authority, refused to be reverenced unduly by Cornelius, who was a righteous man, and was prostrating himself before him, and acknowledged himself to be but his equal, saying, *Arise, do it not, I myself am also a man.* But on discovering the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, he soon displayed with what great power he had risen above others. For by a word he smote their life, which he detected by the searching of the Spirit; and called to mind that he held within the Church the chief power against sinners, which, when the honour had been violently thrust on him, he refused to acknowledge before his righteous brethren. In the one case holiness of conduct deserved a communion of equality, in the other his zeal for vengeance displayed his rightful power. Paul did not acknowledge that he was superior to his righteous brethren, when he said, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.* And he immediately added, *For by faith ye stand.* As if he were saying, We have not dominion over your faith, for this very reason, because ye stand by faith. For we are your equals, in a case where we know that you are standing firm. He seemed not to know that he was superior to his brethren when he said, *We have made ourselves as little ones among you;* and again, *And ourselves your servants through Jesus Christ.* But when he discovered a fault, which needed correction, he immediately remembered that he was their master, and said, *What will ye? shall I come to you with a rod?*

[1] principatum

Acts 10, 26.

Acts 5, 1—11.

2 Cor. 1, 24.

1 Thess. 2, 7. 2 Cor. 4. 5.

1 Cor. 4, 21.

46. A high place is therefore rightly discharged, when a ruler exercises his authority rather over sins, than over his brethren. For nature has made us all equal; but that some are committed to others to rule over them, it is not nature, but their own fault which places them beneath. Rulers,

therefore, ought to raise themselves above the vices, on account of which they are placed above others: and, when they correct offenders, they should attend carefully to smite their faults with discipline, by the right of their power, but, by guarding their humility, to acknowledge, that they are equal with those very brethren, who are corrected. Although it is frequently even right, that we should, in our secret thought, prefer those, whom we correct, to ourselves. For their faults are smitten, through us, with the vigour of discipline, but, in the faults we ourselves commit, we are not wounded by any one, with an attack of even a word. We are, therefore, the more indebted to the Lord, the more we sin without punishment from man. But our discipline the more exempts those under it from Divine punishment, the more it leaves not their faults unpunished here. We must maintain then both humility in our heart, and discipline in our work. And we must, meanwhile, keep careful watch, lest the rights of discipline should be relaxed, while the virtue of humility is unduly guarded, and lest, while a ruler humbles himself more than is becoming, he should be unable to bind beneath the bond of discipline the life of his subjects. Let us outwardly, then, keep up that office, which we undertake for others' benefit. Let us keep, within, the estimate we entertain of ourselves. But yet even those committed to us may properly learn, by some evidences which break forth, that we are such to ourselves within, in order to see what to dread from our authority, and to learn what to imitate from our humility. Having maintained the authority of our office, let us return unceasingly to our heart, and assiduously consider, that we are created on an equality with others, not that we have been temporally placed above others. For the more eminent is our power outwardly, the more ought it to be kept down within, lest it should overpower our thought, lest it should hurry the mind to be delighted with it, and lest the mind should soon be unable to control that power, to which it submits itself from desire of authority.

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47. David had well learned to govern his kingly power, who used to overcome, by humbling himself, all pride at this power, saying, *O Lord, my heart is not exalted.* And who subjoined, to increase his humility, *Nor mine eyes lofty.* And added, *Neither have I walked in great things.* And

Ps. 131, 1.

Job 36, 5. examining himself still further, with most searching enquiry, *Nor in wonderful things above me.* And drawing forth also all his thoughts from the bottom of his heart, he subjoins, saying, *If I have thought not humbly, but if I have exalted my soul.* Lo! he frequently repeats the sacrifice of humility, offered from his inmost heart, and, by again and again confessing, ceases not to offer it, and brings it before the eyes of his Judge, by repeatedly speaking of it. What is this? and how had he learned, that this sacrifice was pleasing to God, which he was offering, in His sight, with so great a repetition of words? Except that pride is ever wont to attend on the powerful, and that haughtiness is almost always associated with prosperity; because also abundance of humour often causes the hardness of a tumour.

48. But it is very wonderful, when humility of manners reigns in the hearts of the lofty. Whence we must consider, that whenever powerful persons think humbly, they attain to an eminence of strange, and, as it were, far distant virtue: and they rightly appease the Lord, the more readily, with this virtue, because they humbly offer Him that sacrifice, which the powerful can scarcely meet with. For it is a most difficult art of living, for a man to possess a high place, and to keep down boasting; to be indeed in power, and yet not to know that he is powerful; to know that he is powerful, for conferring favours, not to know all the power he possesses for requiting wrongs. It is therefore rightly said of such, *God rejecteth not the mighty, though He Himself is mighty.* For he, in truth, desires to imitate God, who administers his lofty power with a view to the benefit of others, and is not elated with his own praises; who, when placed above others, desires to serve, and not to rule over, them. For it is swelling pride, and not position of power, which is to blame. God confers power, but the wickedness of our mind causes haughtiness at our power. Let us take away, then, what we have contributed of our own, and those things, which we possess of God's bounty, are good. For because not lawful power, but wicked deeds are condemned, it is fitly subjoined,

[1] prodesse, præesse

Ver. 6. *But He saveth not the wicked, and giveth judgment to the poor.*

xxvii. 49. Holy Scripture is frequently wont to call the humble,

'poor.' Whence they are mentioned in the Gospel, with the addition, 'spirit,' when it is said, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* For, because riches visibly manifest the powerful, those are poor in their own sight, who are not puffed up in their own minds. But he calls those 'wicked,' who are either cut off from the piety of the faith, or who else contradict themselves, by their wicked habits, in that which they faithfully believe. Because then Almighty God condemns pride of wickedness, not loftiness of power; after it was said, *God rejecteth not the mighty, though He is Himself mighty;* it is rightly subjoined, *But He saveth not the wicked, and giveth judgment to the poor.* That is, He destroys the proud, but sets free the humble, by His judgment. Or certainly He gives judgment to the poor, because those who are now wickedly oppressed, then come themselves as judges over their oppressors.

Book XXVI. Matt. 5, 3.

50. There are in truth two classes, namely, of the Elect and the reprobate. But two ranks are comprised in each of these classes. For some are judged and perish; others are not judged and perish. Some are judged and reign; others are not judged and reign. They are judged and perish, to whom it is said in our Lord's declaration, *I hungered, and ye gave Me not to eat; I thirsted, and ye gave Me not drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye covered Me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not.* To whom it is before said, *Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* But others are not judged in the last judgment, and yet perish. Of whom the Prophet says, *The ungodly do not rise again in the judgment.* And of whom the Lord declares, *But he that believeth not is judged already.* And of whom Paul says, *They who have sinned without the Law, shall perish without the Law.* Therefore even all unbelievers rise again, but to torment and not to judgment. For their case is not then examined; because they come into the presence of their strict Judge, with the condemnation already of their own unbelief. But those, who retain their profession of faith, but have not works in accordance with it, are convicted of sin, in order to their perishing. But they, who have not enjoyed even the sacraments of the faith, do not

Mat. 25, 42. 43. Ib. v. 41. Ps. 1, 5. John 3, 18. Rom. 2, 12.

Job 36, 6. hear the reproof of the Judge at the last ordeal; for, condemned already by the darkness of their own unbelief, they do not deserve to be condemned by the open reproof of Him, Whom they had despised. Those hear at least the words of the Judge, because they have retained at least the words of His faith. These hear not in their condemnation the sentence of the eternal Judge: because they would not retain their reverence for Him even in words. Those perish by the Law, because they have sinned under the Law; whilst no mention of the Law is made to these, in their condemnation; because they made no effort to have any thing of the Law. For a prince, who administers an earthly commonwealth, punishes in different ways a citizen, who offends at home, and an enemy who makes war abroad. In the first case, he considers his rights, and condemns him in language of just reproof. But against an enemy he wages war: he wields instruments of destruction, and inflicts the tortures his wickedness deserves. But he does not enquire what the law provides for his offence. For it is not necessary for him to be destroyed by Law, who could never be held by the Law. Thus, therefore, in the last judgment, both a lawful reproof smites him down, who has departed in his conduct from that which he held in profession; and he is destroyed without a judicial sentence, who is not held by the law of faith.

51. But of the class of the Elect, some are judged and reign. As those, who wipe away with their tears the stains of their life, who, atoning their former misdeeds by their subsequent conduct, conceal from the eyes of their Judge, with the cloak of alms deeds, whatever unlawfulness they may have ever committed. To whom, when placed at His right Mat.25, 35. 36. hand, the Judge says at His coming, *I hungered, and ye gave Me to eat. I thirsted, and ye gave Me to drink. I was a stranger, and ye took Me in, naked, and ye covered Me; sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came to* Ib.v.34. *Me.* To whom he speaks before, saying, *Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* But others are not judged, and yet reign; as those, who surpass even the precepts of the Law in the perfection of their virtues; because they are by no

means satisfied with fulfilling that which the Divine Law enjoins on all, but with surpassing eagerness desire to perform more, than they would learn from general precepts. To whom it is said by the voice of the Lord; *Ye which have left all and have followed Me, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His Majesty, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* And of whom the Prophet says, *The Lord will come to judgment with the elders of His people.* And of whom Solomon, when speaking of the Bridegroom of holy Church, observed, saying, *Her husband is noble in the gates, when he sitteth with the elders of the land.* These, therefore, are not judged in the last judgment, and yet reign, because they come as judges together with their Creator. For, leaving all things, they performed, from ready devotion, more than they heard ordered in general terms. For that, which the rich young man heard, was said by a special command to the more perfect, and not generally to all, *Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow Me.* For if a general command bound all persons under this precept, it would be at once a fault for us to possess any thing of this world. But a general direction to all persons in Holy Scripture is one thing, a command specially to the more perfect is another. These then are rightly not bound by the general judgment, who in their conduct have far surpassed even general precepts. For as they are not judged, and yet perish, who, from the persuasion of unbelief, scorn to be bound by the Law; so, they are judged not, and yet reign, who, from the persuasion of godliness, advance even beyond the general precepts of the Divine Law. Hence is it, that Paul, far surpassing even special precepts given him, performed more in deed, than he received by the appointment of permission. For when he had received, that preaching the Gospel he should live of the Gospel, he both communicated the Gospel to his hearers, and yet refused to be maintained at the expense of the Gospel. Why then should he be judged in order to reign, who received a less obligation, but found out a higher mode of life? Let it be said then rightly, *He giveth judg-*

Book XXVI.

Mat. 19, 28.

Is. 3, 14.

Prov. 31, 23.

Mat. 19, 21.

1 Cor. 9, 14. 15.

Job 36, 7. *ment to the poor:* because, the more they are despised, by this world, for their great humility, the more do they then rise up, with greater height of power, to the seats which have been assigned them. Whence it also follows;

Ver. 7. *He will not withdraw His eyes from the righteous, but establisheth kings on the throne for ever, and there are they exalted.*

52. For God is perhaps believed to have withdrawn His eyes from the righteous, because they are here wounded by the injustice of the unrighteous, and are unavenged. But He then more regards His servants, when the iniquity of their persecutor unjustly afflicts them. For, beholding what they here humbly endure, He doubtless even now looks forward to the recompense He is there mercifully to bestow on them. He does not therefore withdraw His eyes from the righteous. Behold how the one groans in his humility; the other is proud, and flourishes in his wickedness. The one bruises his heart, the other is exalted with pride at his iniquity. Which then of these is far withdrawn from the sight of God, the one who has suffered injustice, or the one who has inflicted it on the sufferers? The one, who has kept hold of Divine grace, amid the gloom of sorrow, or he who, amidst external pleasure, has lost the light of righteousness within?

xxviii. 53. But holy men are properly termed 'kings,' in the language of Scripture; because having been raised above all the motions of the flesh, at one time they control the appetite of lust; at another, they moderate the heat of avarice; at one time, they bow down the boastfulness of pride; at another, they crush the suggestion of envy; at another, they extinguish the fire of passion. They are 'kings' then, because they have learned not to give way to the motions of their temptations, by consenting to them; but to gain the mastery, by ruling over them. Since, therefore, they pass, from this power of authority, to the power of retribution, let it be rightly said, *He establisheth kings on the throne for ever.* For they are wearied for a time, by ruling themselves, but they are placed for ever on the throne of the kingdom of eternal elevation; and they there receive the power of justly

judging others, just as they are here unskilled in unjustly sparing themselves. For it is hence said in another place; *Until righteousness be turned into judgment.* Paul says of himself and his fellows; *That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.* Righteousness, then, is turned into judgment, because they, who now live righteously and blamelessly, then obtain the power of judging others. Hence the Lord says to the Church of Laodicea, *To him that hath overcome I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I have overcome, and have sat with My Father on His throne.* The Lord asserts, that He had sat as a conqueror with His Father on His throne, because after the struggles of His passion, after the reward of His resurrection, He pointed out more clearly to all, that He was equal to the Power of the Father, and He made it known that He was not inferior to Him by having trampled under foot the sting of death. Hence He says to Mary, who did not as yet believe that He was like His Father, *Touch Me not, for I have not yet ascended to My Father.* For, for us to sit on the throne of the Son, is for us to judge with the authority of the Son Himself. For, because we derive, from His virtue, the power of judgment, we sit, as it were, on His throne. Nor is it inconsistent, that He declares, in another place, that His disciples will come on twelve thrones, and that here He says, that they will sit on His throne. For, by twelve thrones is set forth the universal judgment, but by the throne of the Son, the special preeminence of judicial power. One and the same thing then is designated by twelve thrones, and by the single throne of the Son, because, namely, the universal judgment is undertaken, by the intervention of our Mediator. Let it be said then, *He establisheth kings on the throne for ever.*

Book XXVI.

Ps. 94, 15.

2 Cor. 5, 21.

Rev. 3, 21.

John 20, 17.

Mat. 19, 28.

54. But by suitably subjoining "*for ever*," he suggests, what he plainly means. For if he were speaking of the throne of an earthly kingdom, he would not have added "*for ever:*" since they who seize hold of that throne, are placed in it, not for ever, but only for a time. But he properly subjoined, *And there they are exalted.* As if he were suggesting to the mind of his hearer, saying, Because they are here brought low, they are there raised up. For

Job 36, 8—10. to holy men this is a place of humiliation, as that is to be one of exaltation. Whence it is written in another place, Ps. 44, 19. *Thou hast humbled them in the place of affliction.* For this present life is a place of affliction. They then, who are journeying to their eternal home, now despise themselves in the place of affliction for a time, that they may then be truly exalted in the place of joy. It follows:

Ver. 8, 9. *And if they shall be in chains, and bound with the cords of poverty, He will shew them their works, and their wickednesses, because they have been violent.*

xxix. 55. The chains of bondage, are the very detention of their present pilgrimage. Paul had seen, that he was bound by Phil. 1, 23. these chains, when he was saying, *I have a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* He perceived that he was bound with the cords of poverty, when, beholding the true Eph. 1, 18. riches, he entreated them also for his disciples. *That ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints.*

But after this it is rightly added, *He will shew them their works, and their wickednesses, because they have been violent.* For when, by loving, we learn more of heavenly glory, we then feel the sins we have committed to have been more burdensome. Whence also Paul, after having felt the grace of heavenly things, found that what he had believed to be in him a zeal for virtue, was but wickedness; 1 Tim. 1, 13. saying, *Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly* Phil. 3, 7. *in unbelief.* Or certainly, when saying, *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.* Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 10. *He will open also their ear, to correct them, and will speak to them that they return from iniquity.*

xxx. 56. To 'open the ear from iniquity,' is to lay open the understanding of knowledge. But a man is reproved, and his ear opened, when he feels within him a desire after eternal goods, and acknowledges the sins which he has outwardly committed. But temporal punishment can also be understood by the chains and cords of poverty. For they who hear not the words of their Ruler, are frequently warned by the blows of the Smiter; in order that punishments, at

least, may lead them onwards to good desires, whom rewards do not invite. Whence it is said by the prophet, *Bind with bit and bridle the jaws of those who do not draw near to Thee.* But if they despise even scourges, it is plain that they there feel the sufferings of heavier punishments, the more they here trample down the grace of greater consideration. Whence also it follows, Book XXVI. Ps.32,9.

Ver. 11, 12. *If they shall hear and observe Him, they shall fulfil their days in good, and their years in glory; but if they shall not hear, they shall pass away by the sword, and shall be consumed with folly.*

57. By 'good,' is designated right conduct, but by 'glory,' heavenly recompense. They, then, who study to obey the Divine commands, fulfil their days in good, and their years in glory. Because they pass the course of this life in right deeds, and perfect their consummation by a blessed retribution. *But if they shall not hear, they shall pass away by the sword, and shall be consumed in their folly.* For vengeance smites them in tribulation, and the end shuts them up in folly. For there are some, whom not even torments keep back from their abandoned habits. Of whom it is said by the Prophet, *Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; Thou hast scourged them, and they have refused to receive correction.* And of whom it is said under the figure of Babylon, *We have cured Babylon, and she is not healed.* Of whom it is said again, *I have slain and destroyed My people, and yet they have not returned from their ways.* These sometimes become worse by the scourge, because, when attacked by pain, they are either more hardened in their contumacious obstinacy, or, what is worse, launch out into even the exasperation of blasphemy. It is well said, then, that they pass away by the sword, and are consumed with folly; for through their scourges, they increase those sins, which they ought, in consequence of them, to correct. And they both feel even here the punishments of the blow, and do not escape there the sufferings of righteous retribution. For it is the infatuation of folly that iniquity so fetters them, that not even punishment keeps them from offending. It follows, xxxi. Jer.5,3. Jer. 51, 9. Jer. 15, 7.

Job 36, 13. Ver. 13. *Hypocrites and crafty men provoke the wrath of God.*

xxxii. 58. When mentioning hypocrites, he appropriately subjoins, 'and crafty.' For unless they are crafty in wit, they cannot consistently make pretence of that which they wish to appear. For there are certain faults, which are easily perpetrated even by those of duller sense. For any one even of dull understanding is able to swell, for instance, with pride, to be eager with the desires of avarice, and to yield to the assaults of lust. But a person is unable to carry on the falsity of simulation, unless he is one of more subtle wit. For whoever is such, is distracted in truth by constant observation, in watching two points; so as to skilfully learn, both to conceal what he really is, and to make a show of what he is not; to suppress his real faults, and to display unreal goods; not to boast himself openly of that, which he seems to be; and to pretend often to decline glory, in order to obtain the greater glory. For, because he cannot attain it by pursuing it before the eyes of men, he generally studies to secure it by shrinking from it. These things then do not at all suit the simple; for if they do, they are no longer simple.

59. But when mentioning hypocrites and crafty men, he very properly added, not that they deserve, but that they *provoke the wrath of God.* For to sin even through ignorance, is to deserve the wrath of God. But wilfully to contradict His commands, to know what is good, but to make light of it, to be able and yet unwilling to do good, is to provoke it. For these are darkened within by the commission of iniquity, and are whitened outwardly by their display of righteousness. To whom it is declared by the voice of the Lord, *Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which appear to men beautiful without, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.* They preserve, then, in outward display, that which they assail in their inward conduct. But, by thinking evil within, they increase those

Mat. 23, 27. 18.

sins, which they conceal outwardly, by assuming another character. They cannot therefore now have any excuse, before the strict Judge, from ignorance; because, while they display every kind of sanctity before the eyes of men, they are a witness against themselves, that they are not ignorant how to live aright. Let it be rightly said then, *Hypocrites and crafty men provoke the wrath of God.* But he adds what befals them at last, saying, Book XXVI.

Ver. 13. *Neither shall they cry, when they are bound.*

60. Every wicked person, who, though he is wicked, does not seek to appear holy, when smarting under the infliction of the scourge, is not ashamed to confess that he is wicked. But a wicked person, who intercepts the judgments of men by a shew of sanctity, even when he is smitten with the rod, shrinks from exposing his iniquity, because he has been accustomed to appear holy. But if he is ever hard pressed, he scarcely confesses, even superficially, that he is wicked; because he is confounded at disclosing his inward character by sincere confession. But we are, as it were, free, when we are not chastened by any reproofs; but we are 'bound,' when we are constrained by the blows of the rod. We cry, then, the more loudly when bound, the more sincerely we confess our sins, when placed beneath the blow. For devout confession is a loud cry in the ears of God. Because then the blows of the rod, even when they chastise hypocrites, do not bring them to honest confession; (for they shrink from being discovered to be sinners, because they were counted holy in the opinion of all men;) though the scourges now smite them to the utmost, though they are aware that they are being led on to eternal punishments, they yet wish to remain the same in the opinion of men, as they had always studied to display themselves. Though smarting, then, even under the blow of the extremest suffering, because they neglect to put forth an honest confession, even when afflicted, they scorn, as it were, to cry out, even when bound. It is well said then, *Neither shall they cry, when they are bound.* xxxiii.

61. Although it can be understood in another way also. For every one, who, although he is wicked, fears not to be called holy by men, though he blames himself as wicked, in his secret thought, yet when he begins to hear of

Job 36, 13. himself frequently as righteous, loses that which he used to hold of himself within. For he pours forth his heart without; and because he willingly receives a false testimony of himself without, he does not enquire what he should think of himself within. Whence it comes to pass, that he seeks even for the solaces of empty praise, if they are wanting, and that, forgetting what he is, he seeks to appear what he is not. While they who are such, then, pretend to be righteous in the judgment of men, and display their praiseworthy actions to the eyes of beholders, they are dealt with justly in secret, so that, the more they endeavour to deceive others, the more are they even themselves deceived as to themselves within. For they lose all eye for anxiously searching into their own state. For they excuse themselves from searching into, and examining their own conduct, but believe themselves to be the persons they are said to be; and they consider themselves to be holy, not because they so live, but because they are so called. But they neglect God's searching judgment, and to look into themselves; for they rest their belief in their merit on the testimony of another's mouth. But when they are smitten by a sudden blow, they are unable either to confess that they are wicked, or to discover themselves as they really are: because, namely, they believed themselves to be holy from the profession of men. It is well said, then, *Neither shall they cry, when they are bound.* For they trust, with vain hope, that they are coming before their heavenly Judge, such as they know they appeared in the sight of men. And the wretched men do not find themselves out, even in the midst of torments; and, while they look for the testimony of untrue praise, they lose the remedy of true confession. They are said even to be bound, and yet to cry not; for, overcome by the importunity of human applause, the wretched men consider themselves holy, even when they are dying in sins. To Is. 46, 8. whom it is well said by the Prophet, *Return ye transgressors to your heart.* For were they to return to their heart, they would pour out themselves in words of outward profession. For what is nearer to us than our heart? What is nearer to us, than that thing which is within us? And yet, when it is distracted with wicked thoughts, our heart wanders far away from us. The prophet then sends the transgressor a long

way, when he compels him to return to his heart: for the more he has distracted himself with outward things, the more does he hardly find out the means of returning to himself. But since, because the mind of hypocrites is diverted from the single consideration of eternity, it is ravaged by the inundation of manifold thoughts, it is rightly subjoined, Book XXVI.

Ver. 14. *Their soul shall die in a tempest.*

62. For they were seeming to live as if in calm, when they were taking care to rejoice in the credit of holiness. But their soul, which used to rejoice in the fatal tranquillity of human praise, dies by a sudden tempest. For most commonly an unexpected tempest suddenly produces a change in all the calm blandishment of the air, and danger cannot be avoided, inasmuch as it could not be foreseen. Whence hypocrites, who neglect to watch over their conduct, are said to die in a tempest. For the sudden whirlwind of an inward shock casts them forth hence, whom the pride of outward applause exalts on high; and, while they embrace in their praise that which they are not, they suddenly find in vengeance what they are. But it is well said by Solomon, *As silver is proved in the fining-pot, and gold in the furnace, so is a man proved by the mouth of him that praiseth him.* Prov. 17, 3. For praise of one's self tortures the just, but elates the wicked. But while it tortures, it purifies the just; and while it pleases the wicked, it proves them to be reprobate. For these revel in their own praise, because they seek not the glory of their Maker. But they who seek the glory of their Maker, are tortured with their own praise, lest that which is spoken of without, should not exist within them; lest, if that, which is said, really exist, it should be made void in the sight of God by these very honours; lest the praise of men should soften the firmness of their heart, and should lay it low in self-satisfaction; and lest that, which ought to aid them to increase their exertions, should be, even now, the recompense of their labour. But when they see that their own praises tend to the glory of God, they even long for and welcome them. For it is written, *They may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Matt. 5, 16. They make themselves, therefore, a path for men to follow, as often as they manifest any thing in themselves, by which God can be recognised; xxxiv.

Job 36, 15. because they seek not to attract the praises of men to themselves, but wish they should pass on, through their means, to the glory of their Maker. But haughty men prostitute their effeminate hearts to human praise, because they are corrupted by self-love. Of whom it is said in 2 Tim. 3, 2. another place, *Men shall be lovers of their own selves.* But of this very corruption of theirs it is here fitly subjoined,

And their life among the effeminate.

XXXV. 63. For, if they were living as men, transitory praise would not infect them with any corruption. Whence the Ps. 31, 24. Prophet persuades the Elect, saying, *Do manfully; and let your heart be strengthened.* For when saying, *Do manfully,* he immediately subjoined, *and let your heart be strengthened.* As if he desired to secure the sex of the heart. For the mind of a luxurious man is corrupted, if it is delighted with transitory objects. The life of hypocrites then perishes among the effeminate, because it is found to be corrupted with the luxury of praise. But in another translation, it is not rendered, *Their life among the effeminate,* but, *Let their life be wounded by angels.* But though these expressions differ in words, they agree in sense; for angels wound the life of the effeminate, when the messengers of truth assail it with the shafts of holy preaching. Because we have heard then what occurs in the damnation of the reprobates, let us hear what follows, respecting the deliverance of the humble.

[1] LXX. ἡ δὲ ζωὴ αὐτῶν τιτρωσκομένη ὑπὸ ἀγγέλων

Ver. 15. *He will deliver the poor from his straitness.*

64. The poor is delivered from his straitness, when any humble person is set free from this affliction of his pilgrimage. For he is here oppressed with even continual tribulations, in order that he may be excited to seek for the joy of real consolation. Whence it follows also,

And will open his ear in tribulation.

To open the ear in tribulation, is to open the hearing of the heart, by the affliction of blows. For when we despise commands, we are treated with a merciful severity, in order that we may fear the rod. Tribulation then opens the ear of the heart, which this world's prosperity often closes. For it Prov. 1, 32. is said by Solomon, *The turning away of the little ones shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.* It follows,

Ver. 16. *He will therefore bring thee safely from a narrow opening into a broad place.* Book XXVI.

65. Every one who forsakes the way of life, and casts himself down into the darkness of sins, plunges himself, as it were, into a well or pitfall. But if, through long commission he is also so weighed down by a habit of sin, as to be unable to rise upward, he is pent in, as it were, in the narrow opening of a well. Whence David the Prophet entreats in the person of sinners, saying, *Let not the tempest of water drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the well press its mouth upon me.* For a tempest of water has, as it were, hurried away him, whom the iniquity of evil doing has moved from stability in goodness. But if it has not yet prevailed by long custom, it has not overwhelmed. He has already fallen into a well, who has done that, which the law of God forbids. But if long custom does not yet weigh him down, the well has not contracted its mouth. He escapes therefore with greater ease, the less closely he is pent in by habit. Whence the prophet Jeremiah, when beholding that Judæa had been overwhelmed, through long habit, by iniquities, bewails himself in his lamentations, under her person, and says, *My life is fallen into a well, and they have placed a stone over me.* For one's life falls into a pit, when it is defiled with the pollution of iniquity. But a stone is placed over, when the mind is also consumed by sin, through long habit, so that, though willing to rise, it is quite unable to do so, because the weight of evil habit presses on it from above. But because it submits to the power of God, and is brought back to the large room of good deeds, after the confinement of evil habit, it is said, *He will bring thee safely from a narrow opening into a broad place.* For he is safely brought from a narrow opening into a broad place, who, after having borne the yoke of iniquity, is brought back by penitence to the liberty of good works. XXXVI. Ps. 69, 15. Lam. 3, 53.

66. For it is, as it were, the narrowness of a confined opening, to wish, and yet to be unable to rise from an overpowering evil habit; to tend, in desire, to things above, but yet still to remain in deed in things below, to advance in heart, but not to follow in act, and to endure one's self as a kind of self-contradiction within one's self. But when a soul, proceeding thus, is assisted by the

Job 36, 16. hand of grace to raise it up, it arrives from a narrow opening to a broad place: because, having overcome its difficulties, it performs the good works which it desires. The prophet David had beheld the enclosure of a narrow opening, when

Ps. 31, 7. 8. he said, *Thou hast delivered my soul from necessities, and hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy.* But he found that he had been brought safely into a broad place,

ibid. when he added, *Thou hast set my feet in a large room.* For our feet are firmly placed in a large room, when we journey to those good things which are fitted for us, and are not impeded by any difficulty. For we are proceeding, as it were, through a wide place whither we please, because we are not hard pressed by any difficulties placed in our way.

67. But Eliu would say this rightly, if his opinion were but suitable to blessed Job. For he believed, that he had been scourged for his faults, and therefore decided that he had fallen into a narrow opening. For with the heavier blows he beheld him afflicted, with the more abominable iniquities he believed him to be weighed down; being surely ignorant that his scourges were an increase of his merits, not a punishment for his sin. But when he declares that he had fallen into a narrow opening, he proceeds, as it were, to speak more fully of the profound depth in which Job is plunged: and says,

And which hath no foundation beneath it.

xxxvii. 68. Every sin has no foundation; because it has no subsistence in its own proper nature. For evil has no substance. But that which any how exists, unites with the nature of good. The narrow opening is said, then, to have no foundation beneath it, because the pollution of sin has no power of subsisting by itself. But since foundation is derived from *fundum*, (bottom,) we may without impropriety understand that 'foundation' is put for bottom, as hearing is derived from ear, and yet the ear itself is frequently designated by the word hearing. When speaking then of a narrow opening, he added, as wishing fully to describe the profound abyss, *And which hath no foundation* (or bottom) *beneath it.* For the infernal pit swallows up him, whom iniquity hurries away. But the infernal pit is rightly believed not to have a bottom; because every one who is swept away

by it, is devoured by the boundless profound. For the Prophet, wishing to describe fully its boundless immensity, says, *The infernal pit hath enlarged its soul, and hath opened its mouth without measure.* As therefore that is said to be enlarged without measure which attracts very many to itself, so it is not improperly believed to be deep, and without a bottom, because it absorbs, as it were, into the boundless abyss of its immensity those, whom it receives into itself. And therefore when saying, *He will bring thee safely from a narrow opening into a broad place,* he fitly subjoined, *And which hath no foundation beneath it.* As if he were saying, He will bring thee safely from a narrow opening, which has no bottom under it. For since it is through sin that we tend to the pit, He brings safely from a narrow opening him whom He delivers from sin. But him whom He rescues from the narrow opening, He withdraws from the depths of hell.

Book XXVI. Is. 5,14.

69. Though it can also be understood in another sense. For as he who is plunged into a well, is confined in the bottom of it; so would the mind fall in, and remain, as it were, at the bottom, if, after having once fallen, it were to confine itself within any measure of sin. But when it cannot be contented with the sin into which it has fallen, while it is daily plunging into worse offences, it finds, as it were, no bottom to the well into which it has fallen, on which to rest. For there would be a bottom to the well, if there were any bounds to his sin. Whence it is well said in another place, *When a sinner hath come into the lowest depth of sins, he contemneth.* For he puts by returning, because he has no hope that he can be forgiven. But when he sins still more through despair, he withdraws, as it were, the bottom from the well, so as to find therein no resting place. It follows,

Prov. 18, 3.

But the rest of thy table shall be full of fatness.

70. The rest of the table, is the refreshment of inward satiety: which is said to be full of fatness, because it is set forth with the delight of eternal pleasure. The Prophet was hungering after the feasts of this table, when saying, *I shall be satisfied, when Thy glory shall be manifested.* He was thirsting for the cups of this table, when saying, *My soul*

xxxviii. Ps. 17, 15. Ps. 42, 2.

Job 36, 17—21. *hath thirsted for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?* Eliu, therefore, wishing to console the temporal sufferings of blessed Job, by an eternal compensation, promises him, as if freely, from himself, that which was justly due to him as his desert, saying, *But the rest of thy table shall be full of fatness.* It follows,

Ver. 17. *But thy cause hath been judged as the cause of the ungodly, thou shalt receive thy cause and judgment.*

xxxix. 71. The cause of the good, is righteousness. And their cause is judged, as the cause of the ungodly, because their righteousness is here smitten with fatherly correction, that they may be taught to exercise greater vigilance, not only by the injunction of commands, but by the infliction of blows. But they receive their cause and justice, because from that righteousness, with which they now live, they hereafter[1] shine forth in the height of judicial power; so that they are then able to judge all things the more powerfully, the more strictly all their conduct is now judged. But these points, which blessed Job ever maintained with stedfast faith, Eliu mentioned, as if he were making some new promise. For haughty men have these peculiarities: they falsely exaggerate what is wrong, and if ever they state that which is good, they bring it forward as something unknown. Whence it comes to pass that they venture to teach those who are wiser than themselves, because, namely, they believe that they alone are acquainted with such subjects. But when they condescend to any words of consolation, they consider that they have been at once degraded, and by the harshness of proud reproof, they reestablish, as it were, their ability; in order that they who seemed to have condescended in soothing speech[2], may be dreaded when reproof has suddenly sprung up. Whence also Eliu immediately added, saying,

[1] tunc.

[2] 'blandientes testes *Ben.* 'testes' seems a misprint.

Ver. 18—21. *Let not then anger overcome thee, to oppress any one, neither let the multitude of places bow thee down. Lay down thy greatness without tribulation, and all the mighty in strength. Prolong not the night, that people may go up for them. Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity, for thou hast begun to follow this after misery.*

xl. 72. In most manuscripts we find 'gifts[3];' in a few, however, but more ancient, we find 'places[4].' But since the

[3] donorum.

[4] locorum.

expression, *Let not the multitude of gifts turn thee aside,* needs no explanation, we have thought good that that expression should be rather expounded, which seems to be explained with some slight difficulty. But the pride, which uttered these words, proves of how great haughtiness they are. But, because we have said that Eliu is a type of the arrogant, and blessed Job of the Elect, if we examine them more accurately, we demonstrate how appropriate they are even now to haughty men within the Church. Holy men wonder at the doings of others, even when trifling, but make light of their own doings, even when great. But haughty men, on the other hand, make light of other persons' doings, even when great, and wonder at their own even when trifling, and generally think well of their own misdeeds, but cease not to think ill of the good qualities of others. For while they seek their own glory, they are mischievously desirous, that whatever virtue is performed by others, should be scarred with the brand of iniquity, and a weighty deed of goodness they pervert into a taint of guilt. For frequently, when they behold the wicked severely punished by the Church, they unjustly make a kind of complaint that the innocent are afflicted, and they miscall the splendour of its discipline by the appellation of iniquity. Whence Eliu, representing the arrogant, as if admonishing Job, says, *Let not anger overcome thee, to oppress any one.* For whatever is done by Holy Church with the censure of discipline, haughty men consider as an emotion of anger. And because, from their desire of human praise, they are ever anxious to appear kind, they consider that none should be corrected with strictness and severity. Whence also, as was before observed, they consider that those are oppressed, whom they see restrained from sin, against their will, even by righteous rulers.

73. But the Lord having been the cause that Holy Church has grown up with a height of religious power in all parts of the world; they assail, and ascribe to sinful pride this very temporal power, which it exercises rightly. Whence Eliu subjoins, saying, *And let not the multitude of places bow thee down.* As if it were said by the tongue of haughty men to Holy Church herself, preserving her humility

Job 36, 18—21. more in prosperity. Because thou art every where regarded with the reverence of faith, beware that thou art not elated with the power[1] this reverence bestows. For they behold certain persons, who under the guise of religion, are puffed up with the sin of pride: and the fault which they justly blame in these, they unjustly bring forward as a charge against all. Not at all considering, namely, that there are those within her, who know how to exercise temporal power aright, though yet despising it, and to love and look forward to eternal objects with full desire; who can discharge the high office which has been committed to them, and carefully fulfil their duty of inward humility; so that neither do they neglect all care for the office they have undertaken, on account of their humility; nor, again, does their humility swell into pride by reason of their office. And if there are perhaps some within her, who serve not God, but their own glory, under pretext of religion, yet she endeavours either severely to correct them, if possible; or, if otherwise, to endure them with patience. And she either, in correcting them, embraces them as her children, or, through tolerating, is harassed by them as her enemies. For she knows that the life of the just is wounded by their pride; she knows that whatever sin is committed through the wickedness of such persons is brought forward as a charge against her. But she is the less afraid of bearing the blame of others' sins, since she is aware that even her Head endured such wrongs as this. For it is written of Him, *And He was numbered with the wicked.* Of Him it is said again, *He Himself hath borne our weaknesses, and He Himself hath carried our sorrows.* Let haughty men then pursue their course, and by their estimate of the wicked, vex the life of the innocent. The Church of the Elect knows how to tolerate the deeds of the one, and the words of the others: and to convert the minds of the wicked by bearing with them. And even though they are not able to be converted, yet she patiently endures their disgrace. For she considers that it tends to secure her a twofold reward, that she is scorned without for the merits of those, by whose life she is wounded even within.

[1] 'fascibus,' al. 'fastibus.'

Is. 53, 12. Mark 15, 28. Is. 53, 4.

74. But it must be observed that he does not say, *Let not the multitude of places elate thee,* but, *Let not the multitude*

of places bow thee down. For every one who is raised up in this world, is turned aside by his very exaltation; because when he exalts himself outwardly, he falls within. Eliu, therefore, beholding the fall of a heart in its pride, says, *And let not the multitude of places bow thee down.* As if it were said to Holy Church, by the voice of haughty men, Take heed, thou art not diverted from thy inward intention, if thou art exalted by the veneration of the whole world. It follows, Book XXVI.

Ver. 19. *Lay down thy greatness without sorrow, and all the mighty in strength.*

75. Whom else do we understand by the mighty of Holy Church, except those, who both by their lofty attempts, and by successful designs have strength to overcome the desires of this world? Its greatness therefore consists in the life of its mighty ones; because it is then rendered more glorious, when its Elect contend, even to the death, with constant resolution, in defence of the Faith. Haughty men, therefore, when Apostles have been withdrawn from this world, and Martyrs withdrawn also to heavenly places, because they perhaps perceive that more learned and powerful rulers are greatly wanting, suspect that they have remained the only ones within the Church. And hence, while they prefer themselves, they insult, under pretence of advising, her, and say, *Lay down thy greatness without sorrow, and all the mighty in strength.* As if they said in open reproaches, "Be not confident, that thou possessest greatness, for, since the old fathers have been taken away, thou hast no longer any in whose life thou canst boast." They say these things in truth, as not knowing that Almighty God does not leave His Church without proper government. For when He summons the strong to their reward, He strengthens, in their place, the weak for the contest: when He rewards the one by bearing them away, He supplies to the others strength for their labours, for Him to recompense. Of whom it is said to the same Holy Church, *Instead of thy fathers, children are born to thee; thou shalt make them princes over all the earth.* For those who are afterwards preferred, are appointed to supply the virtue of the old fathers, because also when aged trees are felled, tender xli. Ps. 45, 16.

Job 36, 18—21. shoots grow up in the place of their strength. But haughty men believe not that they are strong, whom they knew at one time to be weak: and they disdain to reverence those when changed, whom they remember to have been contemptible.

76. But since they see that the more righteous are few, and the ungodly the largest body therein, just as in threshing the fruits, the quantity of the chaff is greater; they despise even the life of the righteous from their estimate of the wicked. They see in truth that some of its rulers, supported by temporal power, revel in the pride of that power. They see that that reverence for religion, which their fathers pre-
[1] so old Mss. al. 'sowed.' served[1] to this world by dying, these sweep away, by exulting in worldly joys; and consider that they are mighty, but not with strength. For while they are supported by temporal power, they are strengthened, as it were, by a kind of weakness. For the stronger they are without, the more are they bereft of all the might of strength within. And therefore it is said to her by haughty men, *Lay down the mighty in strength.* As if it were plainly said, They once clung to thee, truly strong, who maintained, in their lives, that which they taught in words. But now they who are thy rulers, are mighty in appearance, not in strength. For they cease not to set themselves forth as worthy of honour, but are the more weak and contemptible, the more they are afraid that respect for their honour is set aside, in comparison with the truth. Haughty men rightly think thus of most persons, but plunge headlong into the sin of pride, the more they suppose all persons whom they behold above them, to be such. For the evil conduct of the many ought not to lead them to form an opinion of all. For although those whom they know, and decide upon, are wicked; yet some, whom they know not, are holy. For now is the season of threshing, and the grains are, as yet, concealed beneath the chaff. No fruit then will be expected from the threshing floor, if that alone, which is seen on the surface, is supposed to be therein. Because, therefore, they despise those whom they behold, and sneer at those, whom they know, being put in the place of the old fathers, it is fitly subjoined,

Ver. 20. *Prolong not the night, that people may go up for them.* Book XXVI.

77. As if the arrogant openly said; Aet not so in the darkness of thy ignorance, as to substitute a host of infirm persons in the place of the strong. For by the name 'people' are designated those, who, given up to the common practice, live without restraint in all that they desire. But to 'prolong the night, that people should go up in the place of the strong,' is, if it is caused by negligenee, that the unlearned and weak oceupy the place of the learned and strong. People go up in the place of the strong, when they who have learned to live wickedly, obtain the place of pastors. And this would be rightly said, if it were spoken humbly. For haughty men, even when they give good advice, exercise their wicked over-bearingness[1]. For, as was before stated, they more desire to smite with reproof, than to eherish with consolation. Whenee it is presently subjoined, xlii. Lat. 'peoples.' [1] superstitionis. vide Ducange.

Ver. 21. *Decline not to iniquity; for thou hast begun to follow this after misery.*

Haughty men in truth eall this the misery of the Church, beeause they suspect that its main body is despised by God: and they seorn it with loftier pride, the more they suspeet that it is utterly despised by God.

Having given rapidly a figurative exposition of these words, we must now gather their moral meaning; that, having learned the figure of the Chureh, which we believe to be generally deseribed, we may learn what we may speeially gather from these words in eaeh single case. He says therefore,

Ver. 18. *Let not, therefore, anger overcome thee, to oppress any one.*

78. Every one, who is required to correct the vices of others, ought first of all to look carefully into himself; lest, while punishing others' faults, he himself should be overcome by his zeal for punishment. For furious anger, under the guise of justice, frequently ravages the mind; and while it seems to rage with zeal for righteousness, it gratifies the fury of its wrath, and eonsiders that it justly performs, whatever its anger wickedly dietates. Whenee also it frequently transgresses the due limits of punishment, xliii. Mor.

Job 36, 21. Mor. because it is not restrained by the measure of justice. For it is right, that when we correct others' faults, we should first measure our own; that the mind should first cease to glow with its own warmth, should first control within itself the impulse of its zeal with calm moderation [1]; lest we should sin ourselves, in the correction of sin, if we are hurried on with headlong fury to punish offences, and lest we, who are deciding on, and punishing, a fault, should commit one by punishing it immoderately. For there follows not the correction, but rather the oppression of the delinquent, if, in punishment, our anger extends further than the offence deserves. For, in the correction of faults, anger ought to be under the control of the mind and not its master, so as not to take the lead in the execution of justice, as though imposing a command, but to follow after, as though obeying directions, and to carry out, as if employed, the sentence which has been made known to it, and not go first as if an employer. It is well said therefore, *Let not anger overcome thee, to oppress any one.* Because, namely, if he, who is endeavouring to correct, is overcome by anger, he oppresses before he corrects. For, whilst he is more inflamed than he ought to be, he rushes unchecked into enormous cruelty, under the pretence of just punishment. And this is frequently the case, for this reason, because the hearts of rulers are too little intent on the love of their Creator alone. For whilst they desire many things in this life, they are distracted with countless thoughts. And when they suddenly discover the faults of their subjects, they are unable to judge them aright, in agreement with God; because they cannot suddenly bring back to the height of severity, their hearts which have been scattered abroad in transitory cares. They therefore discover less readily, when excited, the balance of moderation for the punishment of sins, the less they seek for it in their season of tranquillity. Whence, when Eliu was saying, *Let not anger overcome thee to oppress any*, in order to express that the causes of injustice and of overpowering anger were the same, he immediately added,

[1] æquitate

And let not the multitude of places bow thee down.

xliv. 79. We are turned aside into as many places, as are the cares with which we are distracted. For as the space of the

body is the place of the body, so is each intention of thought the place of the mind. And if, while it is impelled hither and thither, it is pleasingly occupied with any delightful thought of its own, it is, as it were, put to rest in a certain place. For as often as, overcome by weariness, we are led from thought to thought, we migrate, as it were, with weary mind from place to place. As many thoughts then as spring up and dissipate the unity of good intention, so do as many places bend down the loftiness of the mind. For the mind would stand upright, if it always clung close to that one thought to which it ought. The mind would stand upright, if it did not, by its countless motions, prostrate itself in fluctuating change. But when it now takes up these things, and now passes off to others, it is turned aside, as it were, from its state of uprightness through a multitude of places; and while it extends itself through many things, it detaches itself from that one intention, to which it ought to adhere. But yet this habit of change has become a nature to us ever since the guilt of the first sin. For when the mind endeavours to stand in itself, it is somehow or other drawn away from itself, without knowing it. For the soul of man is diverted by an impulse of disgust, from every object to which it directs its thoughts. But whilst it eagerly seeks for subjects to think upon, and suddenly loathes those it has thought upon, it teaches us, that that which does not continue at rest, wherever placed, depends on something elsewhere. For it does, in truth, depend on Him, by Whom it was created. And because it was made to seek after God alone, and since every thing which it seeks beneath Him, is less than He; that which is not God, justly does not satisfy it. Hence it is that it is scattered hither and thither, and turns away, as we said, under the impulse of loathing, from every object. For being eagerly desirous of satisfaction, it seeks a place wherein to rest; but it has lost that One, Whom it might have had to its satisfaction. Whence it is now led through many objects, that it may be satisfied with their variety at least, since it cannot be satisfied with their quality.

80. But holy men watch themselves with careful observation, so as not to be separated, through changeableness, from the object of their thoughts; and, because they desire to be

Job 36, 18. Mor. ever the same, they carefully confine themselves to the thought with which they love God. For, in the contemplation of their Creator, they are about to obtain this, that they enjoy always the same stability of mind. No changeableness then dissipates them; because, namely, their thought ever continues without any difference in itself. They endeavour, therefore, now to imitate that, with labour, which, afterwards, they receive with joy as a gift. To this unchangeable state had the Prophet attached himself by the virtue of love, when saying, *One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord.* To this unity Paul had adhered in his intention, when saying, *But one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I follow after for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ.* For, if there is any human weakness in their hearts, a severe examination speedily checks it, and when their thought wanders as if childishly, they are soon kept in restraint by manly correction. Whence it is, that they collect at once their distracted mind; and fix it, as far as they are able, in one single thought. Because then the position of the mind is bent down by the changeableness of thoughts, it is rightly said by Eliu, *Let not the multitude of places turn thee aside.*

Ps. 27, 4.

Phil. 3, 13. 14.

81. But frequently, while the mind of a righteous man stands firm in the stronghold of its resolution, while it recovers itself from every dispersion of change, and keeps down whatever superfluously arises within; it is smitten by the very glory of its own rectitude, and is raised up with the pride of presuming on itself. For he who performs great deeds, though he may think humbly of himself, yet knows that his doings are great. For, if he knows not that they are great, he doubtless keeps but little watch over them. And while he neglects to watch them, he either makes less progress in them, or loses them altogether. Whilst then it is necessary to know our good deeds, in order to guard them; from the very knowledge of them, a way is opened to our pride, and the hand of sin, by whose ravages they are to be snatched away, is admitted to the heart of him who does them. But it is brought about by a marvellous dispensation, that our Creator suffers a mind which

is elated by prosperity, to be smitten with sudden temptation; in order that it may, in infirmity, behold itself more truly, and may descend, already improved, from that haughtiness of pride, which it had assumed from its virtues. Whence it is now rightly subjoined; Book XXVI.

Ver. 19. *Lay down thy greatness without tribulation, and all the mighty in strength.*

82. For the motions of the heart are mighty, when they feel only those things which are virtuous. But we lay down our greatness and our mighty motions, when we are compelled, by the assaults of sin, to consider what we are. We lay aside our mighty motions, when we are no longer raised up by our virtue, but when, by consenting to sin, we are fearful of being overwhelmed by that infirmity, with which we are assaulted. For the mind has great confidence in itself, when it sees that its strength is adequate to its wishes. It arrogates at once to itself the assurance of sanctity, and thinks that it is now equal even to all the heights of virtues, which it has conceived in thought only. But when a temptation suddenly arises and pierces it through, it utterly confounds those lofty thoughts, which had sprung up from its virtues. For an unexpected enemy enters, as it were, an unsuspecting city; and the necks of haughty citizens are smitten with a sudden stroke. There is nothing then at that time but continual lamentation, whilst the captured city of the mind is, by means of slaughter, bereft of the glory of its great ones. Whence it is now said, *Lay down thy greatness without tribulation, and all who are mighty in strength.* As if it were plainly said, Repress all the pride thou hadst conceived within, at thy good deeds, and lay down those mighty motions of the heart, which thou hadst from thy just doings; because thou now considerest, in the assault of adversity, how vainly thou before entertainedst high thoughts of thyself in thy pride. Which greatness, it is said, must be laid aside without tribulation, doubtless, because when humility makes progress through temptation, that very adversity, which secures the mind from pride, is itself prosperous. But yet this is not effected without great tribulation, when the tranquil mind is assailed by the inroads of temptations, as if by a sudden enemy. For, when the adversity of temptation xlv.

Job 36, 20. Mor. forces itself into the mind, it produces therein a kind of darkness, and confounds, with the gloom of its bitterness, that soul which had long been enlightened, within itself, by the radiant sweetness of its virtues. Whence it is also fitly subjoined;

Ver. 20. *Prolong not the night, that people should go up for them.*

xlvi. 83. For the night is indeed prolonged, when the sorrow, that springs from temptation, is not ended by the rising up of consolation. The night is protracted, because the sorrow of the mind is prolonged by confused thoughts. For whilst the mind, placed in temptation, considers that it is driven away from the former solidity of its virtue, it is blinded by superinduced sorrows, as by a kind of gloom. And its eye is closed to every ray of joy, whilst it anxiously trembles, lest it should entirely lose that which it had before begun to be. Whence it is also well said, that, in this night, people go up in the place of the strong; because, namely, in this sorrow of temptation, instead of bold emotions, unworthy and manifold thoughts spring up in the heart. For whilst it sees, in this perturbation, that it has already almost lost that which it had been, it heaps up in itself countless waves and tumults. At one time it sorrows that it has lost its tranquillity; at another, it is afraid lest it should fall into evil deeds. At one time it calls to mind on what a height it had stood, at another, it observes in what a depth of vices it is lying, by means of its pleasure. At one time it prepares itself to recover its strength, at another, as though already defeated and crushed, it despairs that it can recover it.

84. When such manifold thoughts then come forth over the convicted mind, people, as it were, rise and press it down in the night. Which people the Prophet had doubtless presumed he could overcome, not by himself, but by the aid Ps. 144, 2. of the Divine protection, when he was saying, *My Protector, and in Him will I hope, subduing people under me.* For people are subjected to holy minds, when foolish thoughts start away from them, at the presence of strict severity; so as not to hurry them through headlong fancies, but, subjected to reason, humbly to cease from the heart. Hence, therefore, the mind which used, in prosperity, to pre-

sume greater things of itself, endures, when placed in temptation, the tumults of hope and despair, it is now well said, *Prolong not the night, that people should go up for them.* As if it were openly said, Disperse at once the darkness of sorrow, when involved in temptation, lest thou, who hadst thought highly of thyself in tranquillity, shouldest overwhelm thyself more fatally in trouble also, with the gloom of thy thoughts. Which Eliu would properly say, if, however, he knew to whom he was saying it. For these sayings are the less suited to blessed Job, the more deeply all things are known by him. But because, as we have often said, haughty men fall even into insulting words of reproaches, while they presume to teach those, whom they ought not, it is added; Book XXVI.

Ver. 21. *Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity, for thou hast begun to follow this after misery.*

85. He follows iniquity after misery, who, after the evils which he endures for his correction, inflames himself, in his glowing heart, with the torches of impatience. Which Eliu believed that blessed Job had done, having heard him speak in bold words, when in the midst of scourges: being ignorant, namely, that every thing which he said, he uttered not from the sin of impatience, but from the virtue of truth, who did not, even when justifying himself, differ from the sentence of the inward Judge. But we must greatly consider how, when saying, *Decline not to iniquity*, he immediately subjoined of this very iniquity; *For thou hast begun to follow this after misery.* xlvii.

86. What is this, that, while he forbids him to decline to it, he condemns him for it, at once, as if he had already declined to it; except that arrogant men wish rather to appear judges, than consolers? Whence also, they sometimes smite, with severe sentences, those faults, which they suspect have arisen in the heart. And, before the fault of the offenders is certain, severe invective of words is brought forward; and a person is struck by their sentence, before any thing appears, to be smitten.

87. Although even just men commonly oppose, by reproof, wicked and secret thoughts; but, when any preceding doings make plain these thoughts, they frequently root out from the hearts of their hearers, by the hand of reproof,

Job 36, 21. Mor. those sins which have not shewn themselves. But then they perceive that they are already following from others, which precede. For as physicians of the body discern that some diseases have already appeared, but heal others, that they may not appear; so do holy teachers sometimes restore to health the wounds they have discovered, and sometimes so deal with men's minds that they are not wounded. In whom we must carefully observe, that as they generally reprove known faults with severity, so do they speak against doubtful thoughts, even with calmness. The undoubted they chastise with blows: the doubtful they ward off by taking precautions. But because arrogant men know not their rule of discrimination, they wound, with the shafts of their sentences, known and unknown, certain and uncertain faults alike. Whence it is now said by Elin, *Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity, for thou hast begun to follow this after misery.* But because the remarks which follow are drawn out with longer allegation, we conclude this book with this close, that it may not be too immoderately extended.

BOOK XXVII.

The last twelve verses of the thirty-sixth chapter are expounded, with the whole of the thirty-seventh, and their meanings ingeniously examined, for the sake of establishing a system of Christian doctrine, and ethics.

1. Whoever is endeavouring to gain knowledge from the mighty words of the arrogant, ought carefully to secure himself from imitating their pride of learning, lest, with the words of virtue, he should acquire the vices of their habits, and in attaining to skill in speaking, should wound himself through unskilfulness in living. For when we hear these persons speaking powerful words, and yet observe them proud of their powerful words, we enter, as it were, the garden of learning, and pluck roses from thorns. We need, therefore, careful discrimination, to cull that which is sweet scented, and to avoid that which pricks us: lest the incautious hand of the gatherer should be wounded with the thorn of their habits, if the flower of their words happens to be carelessly gathered. Eliu, therefore, being both learned and arrogant, produces at one while something to give a sweet scent, and at another, something to wound. We must then so gather what is fragrant from his teaching, as yet to carefully guard against the wounds of his pride. He introduced, indeed, many remarks above with a moral object, and yet in the words which follow he raised himself solely to the mysteries of prophecy. For he abandons the low ground of morality, and rises to the heights of prophecy. i.

2. Nor is it to be wondered at, that a haughty man could be filled with the prophetic spirit, when Saul also was in the number of the prophets. But why do we say this of Saul, when we know that even a she ass learned rational words from the sight of an Angel? But as the irrational 1 Sam. 10, 11. Num. 22, 28. 2 Peter 2, 16.

Job 36, 22. animal uttered rational words, and yet went not so far as to take a rational nature in exchange; thus does an unworthy person often receive holy words by the spirit of prophecy, but yet does not attain to deserve the glory of sanctity; so as to rise above himself in his words, and listlessly to sink beneath himself in his life. Whence Eliu, though not now humble, beholds the humble advent of our Redeemer: and announces, in prophecy, Him, Whom he assails with his haughty manners, saying,

Ver. 22. *Behold, God is lofty in His strength, and none is like Him among lawgivers.*

ii. 3. As if he said plainly, He, Who will appear humble in weakness, remains lofty in strength, Paul also witnessing this, who says, *For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God.* Of Whom it is rightly subjoined, *None is like Him among lawgivers.* Moses was a lawgiver, Joshua a lawgiver, the Prophets lawgivers also. We can term all lawgivers, who, we know, admonish the people rightly from the Law. But there is no one like to this Mediator among lawgivers. For they, having been called by grace from their sins, return to innocence, and, from what they have experienced in themselves, bring back others by their preaching. But our Redeemer is Man without sin, a Son without adoption, and has never committed any thing which He has disapproved. And He so speaks to the world by His Manhood, as yet to be still the Lord of the same world before all ages by His Godhead. Hence certain persons believed that the Mediator between God and men was like the lawgivers. For when He asked, *Whom do men say that the Son of Man is*, the disciples answered and said, *Some say that He is John the Baptist, others Elias, others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets.* But He doubtless disclosed to Peter how lofty He was in strength; for looking on Him truly, he separated Him from an equality with lawgivers, saying, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* Whence the Bride rightly says of Him in the Song of Songs, *By night on my bed I sought Him Whom my soul loveth, I sought Him, and I found Him not.* And a little after, *The watchmen who guard the city found me.* Of Whom she says again, *They wounded me, they took my cloak.*

2 Cor. 13, 4.

Mat. 16, 13. 14.

ib. 16.

Sol. Song 3, 1.

ib. 3.

ib. 5, 7.

And she asks them again, saying, *Saw ye Him Whom my soul loveth? When I had passed by them but a little, I found Him Whom my soul loveth.* Book XXVII. Sol. Song 3, 3. 4.

4. For the Beloved is sought for by night on the bed; because He is longed for in tribulation of spirit, in the secret chambers of the heart. Whom yet the Bride, though seeking, finds not; because every Elect soul is already kindled with the torches of His love, but the sight of Him, which is sought for, is still denied, that the longing of the lover may increase; and water is, as it were, withdrawn in thirst, that the heat of the thirst may be augmented, and that the longer a person thirsts, and longs for it, the more eagerly may he seize it at last when he has found it. But the watchers find her when seeking for Him; and wound her, and take away her cloak: because when anxious teachers meet with any soul, already seeking for a sight of its Redeemer, they wound it, by the word of preaching, with the darts of heavenly love: and if it has any covering of its former conversation, they take it away; in order that the more it is stripped of the burden of this world, the more quickly may He, Who is sought for, be found by her. But it is well added, *When I had passed by them but a little, I found Him Whom my soul loveth?* because the mind, eager for the sight of Him, would not find Him, Who is above man, unless it were to go beyond the estimate of the Prophets, the loftiness of the Patriarchs, and the standard of all men. To pass by the watchers, then, is to postpone, in comparison of Him, those even whom the soul admires. And He, Who was sought for, is then beheld, if He is believed to be a Man, but yet above the measures of men. Whence it is now well said, *None is like Him among lawgivers.* But He in truth, appearing to our sight through the infirmity of the flesh, as He rejects some, and calls others, has displayed marvellous judgments, which can be thought upon, and yet not be comprehended by us. For He says, *For judgment have I come into this world, that they which see not, might see, and that they which see might be made blind.* John 9, 39. And again, *I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* Mat. 11, 25. In which judgments the Jews are doubtless

Job 36, 23, 24. rejected, the Gentiles gathered. Which fact in truth we can certainly wonder at, but are not at all able to search into. Whence it is now also well subjoined by Eliu,

Ver. 23. *Who will be able to search out His ways? Or who dareth to say to Him, Thou hast wrought iniquity?*

iii. 5. As if he said; 'How can He be blamed, Whose doing cannot be searched into? For no one judges properly of that, which he knows not. We ought, therefore, to rest the more silent under His judgments, the more we see that we perceive not the reason of His judgments. Whence it is also well subjoined.

Ver. 24. *Remember that thou knowest not His work, of Whom men have sung.*

iv. 6. In Holy Scripture sometimes Angels, and sometimes persons[1] of perfect life, are called 'men[2].' For that an Angel is sometimes called a man, the Prophet Daniel bears witness, saying, *Behold, the man Gabriel.* And again, that persons of perfect life are called by the name of 'men,' Wisdom declares in the Proverbs, saying, *Unto you, O men, I call.* Men then sing of the Lord, when either spirits from above, or perfect teachers, make known to us His power. But yet His work is not known; because doubtless even they who preach Him, venerate His unpenetrated judgments. They, therefore, both know Him, Whom they preach, and yet know not His works: because they know, by grace, Him, by Whom they were made, but yet cannot understand His judgments, which are wrought by Him even above their understanding. For that Almighty God is not clearly seen in His doings the Psalmist bears witness, saying, *Who hath made darkness His secret place.* And again, *Thy judgments are a great deep.* And again, *The deep like a garment is His clothing.* Whence also it is well said by Solomon, *As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones grow together in the belly of her that is with child, so thou knowest not the works of God, Who is the Maker of all things.*

[1] homines. [2] viri. Dan. 9, 21. Prov. 8, 4. Ps. 18, 11. Ps. 36, 6. Ps. 104, 6. Eccles. 11, 5.

7. For to state one thing out of many, two little ones come to this light: but to one it is granted to return to redemption by Baptism; the other is taken away before the regenerating water bedews it. And the son of faithful parents is often

taken off without faith, while that of unbelievers is renewed by the grant of the Sacrament of faith. But some one may perhaps say, that God knew that he would act wickedly even after Baptism, and that He did not, on that account, bring him to the grace of Baptism. But if this is the case, the sins of some persons are without doubt punished even before they are committed. And who, that thinks rightly, would say this, that Almighty God, Who releases some from the sins they have committed, condemns, in others, these very sins, even when not committed? His judgments are, therefore, hidden; and they ought to be reverenced with an humility, as great as the obscurity by which they cannot be seen. Let him say then, *Remember that thou knowest not His work, of Whom men have sung.* As if he were to say plainly, The works of Him, of Whom mighty men have spoken, are concealed from the eyes of thy mind; because they surpass the measure of thy knowledge, inasmuch as thou art circumscribed by thy humanity. It follows,

Ver. 25. *All men see Him, every one beholdeth afar off.*

8. Every man from the fact that he is created rational, ought to conclude from reason that He Who made him is God. And to see Him at this time, is doubtless to behold, through reason, His sovereign power. But when it is said, *All men see Him*, it is rightly subjoined, *Every one beholdeth afar off.* For, to behold Him afar off, is to behold Him at present not in Person, but to think of Him as yet, solely from admiration of His works. Even the Elect behold Him here afar off; because they do not as yet discern His brightness with the keenness of inmost vision. For although they are near Him now by love, yet they are separated from Him by the burden of their earthly habitation; and although they cling close to Him by good living, yet they sigh that they are far removed from the sight of His contemplation. And when the reprobate also see Him coming to judgment, they doubtless behold Him afar off, because they behold Him not in the form of His Godhead, but in His Manhood only, in which alone He could even be comprehended. Because, namely, their own evil deeds, being then brought back to their memory, strike against their sight: and while they behold the Manhood of Him, Whose Godhead they see not, they

v.

Job 36, 26. are, in a wonderful manner, far away from the sight of Him Whom they behold. But when it is said, *Remember that thou knowest not His work*, and it is then subjoined, *All men see Him*, (and to behold Him, is, as we before said, to infer from reason His all-transcendent essence,) it is a great marvel that we behold God Himself, and yet know not His work. For we cannot doubt of His essence, and yet we remain uncertain of His judgments. That which is highest is plain to us, that which is least is concealed. For His works are surely less than Himself; and yet we behold the Doer, but are in darkness as to His doing: from the very fact, that the reason why any thing is done is uncertain, but Who it is that acts thus uncertainly, is not uncertain. Let him say then, *Remember that thou knowest not His work, of Whom men have sung; all men see Him, every one beholdeth afar off.* Because we see by reason that He exists, Whose judgments we by no means comprehend. But yet, at present, we behold Him afar off, because we are separated from His strength by the mist of our own infirmity. It follows,

Ver. 26. *Behold, God is great, surpassing our knowledge.*

vi. ver. 22. 9. He had said above, *Behold, God is lofty.* He now says again, *Behold, God is great.* Why is it, that when speaking of God he says, 'Behold,' and again repeats, 'Behold,' if it be not that we say, 'Behold' of that thing, which we point out as present? And since God is every where present, when 'Behold' is said of Him, He is said to be present even to those who see Him not. But he well says, that He surpasses our knowledge, Who he had said before was seen by all men. Because, though He is beheld by reason, yet His greatness is not penetrated by any subtlety of our senses. For whatever we know of the brightness of His greatness, is beneath Him; and the more we suspect that we comprehend His power, the more are we driven far away from the knowledge of Him. For though our mind is caught up on high, yet it is transcended by the immensity of His greatness. Of Whom we know as it were something in part, when we feel that we are not able to know Him worthily. It follows,

The number of His years cannot be reckoned.

vii. 10. He wished, in some way or another, to speak of eternity, and he called the very length of eternity, 'years.'

For when we wish to expand the briefness of time, we extend our moments through hours, our hours through days, our days through months, and our months through years. Since then he wished to speak of something very large, but did not find what wider thing to speak of, he multiplied years in God without reckoning their number, saying, *The number of His years cannot be reckoned;* in order that while he multiplies those things which are long in themselves, human weakness may learn that it cannot measure the length of eternity. Stretch therefore thine eye into eternity, that thou mayest see God, either when He is from the beginning, or how far He extends. And there is no boundary any where above, because He begins not to be; no boundary any where below, because He ceases not to be. All things are bounded together within Him; but He is extended around all things without space, is spread abroad without place. Behold all things which are made, by the very circumscription of their creation, are encircled by a boundary both above and below. For by their own law, because they begin from not being, they are hastening not to be.

11. But some things have marvellously received this, that, though a boundary commences them above, yet no boundary confines them below; and that though they begin to be, yet that they do not cease to be for ever. But their eternity is unlike the highest eternity, because they began to be eternal. When we look at their extremes, we do not comprehend that end of theirs which is altogether wanting; but when we carry our mind back, we behold their commencement. And while we turn our thoughts below and above in them, we do not at all understand how far they extend, but we see from whence they begin. But since God has a kind of length of being through eternity, which neither commences with a beginning, nor is terminated by an end, and which does not admit in itself the from whence, nor until when; let it be said then, *The number of His years cannot be reckoned.* By the number of His years being mentioned, His Being is shewn to be of long duration. But by its being said to be beyond number, this same Being is pointed out as infinite and incomprehensible. But we have learned, that He is known to the minds of men, when all men see Him; and

Job 36, 27. that we behold and admire His greatness, when the number of His years is considered beyond number; it now remains for us to hear, what are His doings. It follows,

Ver. 27. *Who taketh away the stars of rain, and poureth forth showers like whirlpools.*

viii. 12. There are two kinds of just persons in this life; one, namely, of those who live uprightly, but teach nothing; another, of those who live uprightly, and teach accordingly. As in the face of heaven some stars come forth, which no storms succeed: and others come forth, which water the thirsty earth with great showers. As often then as persons live uprightly in Holy Church, but yet know not how to preach this same uprightness, they are stars indeed, but produced in the dryness of the air: because they can give light to others by their example of good living, but cannot rain by their word of preaching. But when certain persons both live uprightly therein, and distil this uprightness into others by their word of preaching, stars appear, as it were, in heaven, to bring on rain, which are so to enlighten others by the merits of their life, as also to rain with the word of preaching. Did not Moses appear in this heaven, as a star of rain; who, when he shone forth from above, watered also the hearts of sinners with the rain of holy exhortation as the thirsty ground beneath, to make it bring forth grass abundantly? Did not Isaiah appear as a star of rain, who in foreseeing and holding up the light of truth, watered the drought of the unbelieving by announcing the words of prophecy? Were not Jeremiah, and the other Prophets, placed as it were in heaven, like stars of rain, who, when exalted on the high eminence of preaching, while they dared boldly to reprove the depravity of sinners, kept down as it were the dust of human blindness, by watering it with the drops of their words? But since, namely, the judgments of heaven take away from this present life the souls of these persons, enclosed in this corruptible flesh, the stars of rain are withdrawn as it were from the face of heaven. And the stars return into their hidden places, when the souls of the Saints, having completed their courses, are laid up in the treasuries of the Inner Disposal.

13. But since the earth would be dried up, if the streams

of rain from above were to cease entirely, when the stars were withdrawn, it is rightly said, *Who taketh away the stars of rain, and poureth forth the showers like whirlpools.* For, when the Lord had taken away the Prophets, He sent the Apostles in their place; to rain like whirlpools, after the external preaching of the Law had ceased, when the old fathers had been withdrawn. He conceals therefore the stars of rain, and pours out showers like whirlpools, because after He withdrew the preachers of the Law to His inmost and secret mansions, a more exuberant power of preaching poured forth, by the words of those who came after. BOOK XXVII.

14. By stars of rain can be designated also the holy Apostles, of whom it is said by Jeremiah to rejected Judæa, *The stars of rain have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain.* Jer.3,3. The Lord, therefore, has withdrawn the stars of rain, and has poured forth showers like whirlpools; because, when He took away from Judæa the Apostles who were preaching, He watered the world with the doctrine of new grace. Both of which things can be understood, not improperly, to have been done in the Church. For when He withdrew the souls of the Apostles to the secret recesses of the regions above, on the dissolution of their bodies, He hid, as it were, from the face of heaven the stars of rain. But, when the stars of rain had been taken away, He gave showers like whirlpools; for, when the Apostles had been withdrawn to the regions above, He disclosed, in more abundant profusion, by the tongues of subsequent expositors, the streams of Divine knowledge which had been long concealed. For that which they stated briefly, they manifoldly increased by expounding it. Whence this very preaching of expositors is not improperly compared to whirlpools, since, while they collect the sayings of many who precede them, they spread themselves out to a greater depth in what they accumulate. For whilst they unite testimonies to testimonies, they make, as it were, whirlpools from drops. And whilst the Gentile world is daily taught by their words, because the mind of sinners receives heavenly wisdom, the water standing on the earth exhibits, as it were, whirlpools. But let not these expositors prefer themselves in any way to the same Apostles in wisdom,

Job 36, 28. when they speak at greater length in exposition. For they ought constantly to remember through whom they have receeived the diseoveries of this very wisdom. Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 28. *Which flow from the clouds.*

ix. 15. For these whirlpools do indeed flow from the clouds; beeause, if the power of understanding did not begin with the holy Apostles, it would not flow more fully through the mouths of teachers. For by 'clouds' in Holy Seripture, sometimes fickle men, sometimes Prophets, sometimes Apostles, are designated. By elouds the fickleness of the human mind is expressed; as Solomon says, *He that observeth the wind, doth not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds, doth never reap.* He doubtless ealls the unelean spirit, 'wind,' but men who are subjected to him, 'clouds;' whom he impels baekwards and forward, hither and thither, as often as his temptations alternate in their hearts from the blasts of suggestions. He, therefore, who observes the wind, does not sow; since he who dreads coming temptations, does not direct his heart to good works. And he who regards the clouds, does not reap, since he who trembles from the dread of human fickleness, deprives himself of the recompense of an eternal reward. By 'elouds' are Prophets set forth, as is said by the Psalmist; *Dark water in the clouds of the air;* that is, hidden wisdom in the Prophets. By 'elouds' also Apostles are designated, as is said by Isaiah, *I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* They are 'stars' then, beeause they shine with the merits of their life; they are 'clouds,' because they water the parched ground of our heart with the streams of heavenly knowledge. For if they were not 'elouds,' the Prophet would not have said, when looking on them, *Who are these that fly as clouds?* The whirlpools of showers pour then from the clouds, beeause the profound instruetions of those that follow derived the origin of their wisdom from the holy Apostles. Of which clouds it is still further fitly subjoined,

Eccles. 11, 4.

Ps. 18, 11.

Is. 5, 6.

Is. 60, 8.

Which cover all things above.

x. 16. When the elouds eover the air above, if we lift up our eyes to the heaven, we behold not the heaven, but them;

nor does our sight penetrate the ethereal regions, because its own infirmity conceals them from it. And when the sun shines forth from the heaven, it first feeds itself on the air which is poured between, that so it may afterwards contemplate the rays of the sun in the sky. Because, therefore, we are carnal men, when we endeavour to attain to heavenly things, we raise, as it were, our eyes to heaven, and direct our gaze thither; for oppressed by our connection with bodily things, we wish to teach it spiritual things. But because our intellect is not permitted to pass over to Divine objects, unless it be first fashioned by the examples of preceding Saints, our eye, as it were, now looks up to heaven, but beholds clouds; because it seeks to comprehend those things which are of God, but is barely able to admire those things which have been given to men. Whence it is said in another place, [1] *Thou enlightenest wonderfully from the eternal mountains.* For he, who cannot behold the rising sun, looks at the mountains tinged with his rays, and discovers that the sun has risen. God enlightens us, therefore, from the eternal mountains, because He illuminates us with the ray of His brightness, by our admiring the doings of former fathers. Behold we are kindled with zeal of devotion and love for the Lord; but we are the better moulded in this devotion and love by our contemplation of these clouds. For what was more devoted than Peter? What more full of love than John? The one through his devotion feared not to tread the watery ridges of the sea. The other rested through love on the very breast of our Maker: and he who had come to the refreshment of a bodily feast, derived spiritual food from the bosom of the Redeemer.

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[1] φωτίζεις σὺ θαυμαστῶς ἀπὸ ὀρέων αἰωνίων. Vers. LXX. Ps. 76, 4.

Mat. 14, 28. 29. John 13, 23–25.

17. But because we have said, that Prophets also are signified by 'clouds,' it is necessary for us still to bring forward the examples of the ancient fathers. Behold when we are wishing to submit, through obedience, to heavenly precepts, we are assisted by considering the footsteps of the old fathers. For what was more obedient than Abraham, who at one word from the Lord, forsakes his kindred, and his country; and for the sake of obtaining his eternal inheritance, fears not to smite him, whom he had received as his heir, when now old and almost ready to die? When we are

Gen. 12, 1–4. ib. ch. 22, 10.

Job 36, 28. endeavouring to gain hold of the virtue of patience, we look at the examples of those who precede us. For what is more Gen. 22, 6. 9. patient than Isaac, who carries the wood, asks about the burnt offering, and is, shortly afterwards, bound, and speaks not: is placed upon the altar, and resists not? What then can be spoken of, more patient than this man? who is led, as if for consolation, and makes an enquiry; who is bound ready for the blow, and is silent; who speaks when about to offer a burnt offering, but when about to be offered as a burnt offering speaks not? When we are endeavouring to gird ourselves for endurance of toils, we are supported by preceding examples. For what is more laborious than Gen. 29, 15—30. Jacob, who though near to Laban by the rights of kindred, discharged for so long a time servile offices in his family, and obeyed him in the place of a servant, that he might enjoy the rewards of the heir? When we are striving to ascend the citadel of continence and chastity, we are supported by the examples of those who precede us. For what Gen. 39, 7. 8. is more chaste than Joseph, who could not, even though a captive, be brought under the yoke of lust at the desire of his wanton mistress? And he was indeed a slave to men, but was, even in slavery, free from the power of dominant wickedness. When we are wishing to be filled with gentleness, we are assisted with the examples of those who pre- Numb. 16, 20—22. cede us. For what was more gentle than Moses, who bears with the sedition of the people committed to his care, and yet entreats the Lord when angry, in behalf of these his persecutors, and exposes himself in their stead to the Divine wrath; because love glows in his holy breast even from persecution? When we are endeavouring to fashion the constancy of our mind against the adversities of the world, we are supported by the consideration of those who precede us. Numb. 14, 6—9. For what is more constant than Joshua, who, when sent to search out the nature of the nations, feared not either the hugeness of their height, nor the multitude of their numbers? Whence he subdued in battle those very same nations which he feared not in searching them out. When we are endeavouring to reach the height of kindness, we are instructed by the examples of those who go before us. For what is more kind than Samuel, who when deposed from his office of

governing the people, humbly seeks for his successor; and anoints him when found to be king, and soon endures him when anointed as his persecutor? He is afraid of dying by his hands, and yet entreats the Lord not to be angry with him. For he himself says when he was sent, *Saul will hear, and will kill me.* And the Truth says to him by Itself; *How long dost thou mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him.* What then can be mentioned more kind than that man, who wishes not that even he should be smitten by God, by whom he is afraid of being killed? When we are advancing to the height of mercifulness and humility, we are supported by the examples of those who go before us. For what can be mentioned more merciful than David, what more humble, who received from the reprobate king insults for his victories, who by his strength rescued the nation of the Israelites from the hand of their enemies, and yet fled away himself lest he should die, as one of no strength? He knows that he himself was elected by the Divine sentence, and that his persecutor was rejected; and yet he submits himself to this very same persecutor of his, with the humility of frequent satisfaction, who takes away the spear of his persecutor, cuts off the border of his cloak, and hastens at once to the top of the mountain, and at one and the same time shews that he has had the power of slaying, and prays that he might not be slain.

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1 Sam. 16, 2.

ib. 1.

1 Sam. 24, 4. ib. 26, 12—16.

18. Because then we are instructed by preceding examples, in all things which we spiritually desire, it is well said of these clouds, *Which cover all things above.* For we are covered by the life of the fathers spread over us, like clouds, in order that we may be watered, to bear the produce of a fruitful growth. And we behold, as it were, the clouds first, when looking up to heaven; because we first behold, with admiration, the doings of the good, and we afterwards penetrate, by our experience, those things which are heavenly. But because the life and the virtue of these clouds, that is, of these ancient fathers, would not be open to us, unless other clouds, that is the Apostles, disclosed it with the light of their preaching, let our discourse turn back to those clouds, which go about the world with their preaching; and let it

Job 36, 29. 30. shew what the Lord has done by their means in the world. It follows,

Ver. 29, 30. *If He will spread out clouds as His tent, and lighten with His light from above, He will cover also the ends of the sea.*

xl. 19. The Lord 'spreads out the clouds,' when, opening the way of preaching to His ministers, He disperses them in every direction, through the breadth of the world. But it is well said, *As His tent.* For a tent is wont to be pitched, on a journey. And, when holy preachers are sent into the world, they make a way for God. Whence it is written, Mal. 3, 1. *Behold, I send My Messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee.* And hence also it is said by Ps. 68, 4. the Psalmist, *Make a way for Him Who ascendeth over the* ib. 7. *west.* And again, *O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people, when Thou passedst through the desert, the earth was moved.* For God, Who of Himself is, not locally, in every place, walks locally into the regions of the world, by means of His preachers. Whence also it is said by the Lev. 26, 12. Prophet, *And I will walk in them.* For He does in truth walk through them, whilst He pours Himself into the hearts of men by their teaching. And in this journey the tents of God are these self-same hearts of the Saints, by which He is covered, as it were, in resting on the way. Whilst coming through them to the minds of men, He effects what He has ordained, and is not beheld. Hence it is that all the synagogue together is called a 'tent,' when the Lord complains by Jeremiah that the priests had ceased from preaching, saying, Jer. 10, 20. *There is none to stretch forth My tent any more, and to set up My curtains.* Hence again it is said of its extermination, Lam. 2, 6. *He hath destroyed His tent, as a garden, He hath thrown down His tabernacle.* For since the Lord at that time dwelt secretly among men in the worship of a single people, He called that self-same people His tent. Whence also these clouds are now rightly called His tent, because God, when coming to us by His grace, is concealed within the hearts of His preachers. Was not Paul His tent, when Rom. 15, 19. coming to the hearts of men, from Jerusalem round about into Illyricum, the Lord was resting in his mind? For he

was a cloud for men, but a tent for God; because He was invisibly retaining Him in his heart, Whom he was by his preaching pouring into the hearts of his hearers. When the same Paul was proceeding towards Rome, bound in chains, to take possession of the world, God, concealed in his breast, was journeying as if in a tent. Because He could not be seen, from being concealed, and yet, disclosed by the words of preaching, He was prosecuting without ceasing the course of grace which He had begun. Moses appeared as His cloud, when, before he undertook the leadership of the Jewish people, he was dwelling for forty years in the wilderness, and aiming at lofty things, lived separated from the converse of the people. But he was made the tent of God, when, on being sent into Egypt, to bring back the people, he was going on, bearing in his heart the invisible truth; and when Almighty God, Who was manifested in his work, was lying concealed in his heart. And He who is ever present, and containing all things, coming into Egypt was journeying thither in His servant. Whence it is written, *God went into Egypt, that He might ransom His people.* Behold He is said to journey, by Whose uncircumscribed presence all things are contained, because He, Who is every where by His Majesty, places, as it were, His steps in the way, by preaching.

Book XXVII.

Acts 27, 28.

Ex. 3.

2 Sam. 7, 23.

20. But words only are by no means sufficient for these same holy preachers, for persuasion, unless miracles are also added. Whence it is said, *When He will spread out the clouds as His tent*, it is rightly subjoined, *And lighten with His light from above.* For what else but miracles ought we to suppose lightnings to mean? Of which it is said by the Psalmist, *Thou wilt multiply Thy lightnings, and confound them.* By these clouds then He lightens from above with His light; because by holy preachers He illumines the gloom of our insensibility even by miracles.

Ps. 144. 6. LXX.

31. And when these clouds rain down with words, and when they disclose, by miracles, the power of their glittering light, they convert to divine love even the farthest boundaries of the world. Whence it is rightly subjoined, *He will cover also the ends of the sea.* A thing which we heard by the voice of Elihu was to take place, but which we at this time see performed by the power of God. For the Almighty

Job 36, 31. Lord has covered, with His lightening clouds, the ends of the sea; because, by the brilliant miracles of preachers, He has brought even the ends of the world to the faith. For, lo! He has now penetrated the hearts of almost all nations; lo! He has joined together in one faith the boundaries of the East and of the West; lo! the tongue of Britain [a], which knew only how to grate barbarian sounds, has begun long since to resound in the Divine praises the Hebrew Alleluia. Behold the ocean, which before was swelling, is now calmed beneath, and subject to, the feet of the saints: and its barbarous motions, which the princes of the earth had been unable to control with the sword, do the mouths of priests bind with simple words through fear of God: and he who, when unbelieving, had not dreaded the bands of combatants, now fears, when faithful, the tongues of the humble. For because the virtue of Divine knowledge is poured into him, by the heavenly words which he hears, and by the brightness also of miracles, he is so restrained by his dread of this same Divine power, as to fear to do wrong, and to long with all his desires to attain to the grace of eternity. Whence it is here also appropriately added,

Ver. 31. *For by these things judgeth He the people, and giveth food to many mortals.*

xii. 22. By these words of preachers, that is drops of the clouds, by these lightnings of miracles, God doubtless judges the peoples; because He invites their terrified hearts to repentance. For when they hear heavenly things, when they attend to marvellous works, they soon return into their own hearts, and afflicting themselves for their former wickednesses, dread eternal torments. But food is given too by these same clouds by which terror is inflicted: since mighty is the trust committed to preachers to know how so to afflict the minds of the haughty, as yet to be skilful in cherishing them when afflicted, with words of consolation; so as to alarm sinners with eternal punishments, and support penitents with the joys of the kingdom of heaven. Whence the very course

[a] This special mention of Britain was probably added after the publication of the work, as the Saxons were not converted till St. Gregory had been some years Pope. See his Eps. to St. Augustine, Bertha, and Edilberthus. Lib. xi. Ind. iv. 28. 29. 64. 65. 66. *Ben.* (St. Gregory was not, however, unaware of the existence of the *British* Church, and may have referred to it. *Ed.*)

of this dispensation is well observed, so that Eliu said, in proper order, that God first judges the people by these, clouds, and afterwards gives them food. Because, in truth Almighty God first reproves and rouses us from our evil deeds, by means of His preachers, and afterwards cherishes and consoles us by hope. For if the Divine dispensation did not act the part of a judge, by these clouds, He never would have said to these same clouds, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* And again, if He did not feed by them our famished hearts, the Lord would never say to His disciples, of the hungering people, *Give ye them to eat.* But we believe that that was then done thus by their hands, that we may see that this is daily taking place without ceasing by their words. For what does Peter effect, when he speaks by his Epistles, unless it be, that our miserably hungry hearts may be fed with the food of the word? What are Paul and John labouring at, when speaking by their Epistles, except that our minds may enjoy heavenly food, and overcome that loathing of hunger with which they were dying? Let it be said then, *When He will spread out the clouds as His tent, and lighten with His light from above, He will cover also the ends of the sea; for by these things He judgeth the people, and giveth food to many mortals.* As if he were plainly saying, If He sends forth His Saints for the ministry of preaching, and aids their words by miracles, He summons the boundaries of all the world to the faith; and by these means He first judges the proud, and afterwards cherishes with hope, and strengthens the humble by the word of consolation.

BOOK XXVII.

John 20, 22. 23.

Mat. 14, 16.

23. But when he was saying, that He gives food to mortals, we must observe that he does not say to all, but 'to many.' Because, namely, it is written, *All men have not faith.* And to certain persons it is said, *Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God.* And again, *No man can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him.* And again, *The Lord knoweth them that are His.* Whence most persons, even in Holy Church herself, retain faith, and yet retain not the life of faith: they partake of the Sacraments of the Lord's humility, but scorn to be humbled in imitation of the Lord. They partake the gentle preaching

2 Thess. 3, 2. John 8, 47. John 6, 44. 2 Tim. 2, 19.

Job 36, 32. of the Divine Word, but continue, in themselves, mighty in pride. Whence here also, after the breadth of the whole collected Church has been signified by the ends of the sea, it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 32. *He hideth the light from the mighty.*

xiii. 24. For those in truth are 'mighty,' who exalt themselves with lofty thoughts. Against whom it is said by Isaiah; Is. 5, 21. *Woe unto you, who are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight.* Against whom also Paul says, Rom. 12, 16. *Be not wise in your own conceit.* But the light is hidden from these mighty ones, because, doubtless, the knowledge of the truth is denied to haughty men. Whence the Truth says by Its own self, Mat. 11, 25. *I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones.* Calling, namely, the haughty, wise and prudent. For He, Who did not subjoin, 'Thou hast revealed them to fools,' but, 'to little ones,' made it plain that He condemned their pride, and not their wisdom. Whence it is said in another place, Ps. 116, 6. *The Lord guarding the little ones.* And in order to shew what is meant by this littleness[1], it is added, *I was brought low, and He set me free.* Because then there are many in the Church, who scorn to be little ones, they cease not to be great in their own sight, even in the place of humility. You may frequently see them raised high in honours, enjoying pleasures, and spreading abroad with the multiplicity of their goods. These often specially desire nothing, except to rule over others, are pleased at being feared by many; neglect to live uprightly, and wish to have the credit of an upright life; court flattery, and are puffed up by applause. And since they are abundantly supplied with goods ready at hand, they do not seek for the joys which are to come. And, because manifold employments engage them, they prove them to be strangers even to themselves. And yet if any trial of their faith arise, because they are contained therein though but in appearance, they defend it by words, they defend it by their exertions, and claim their heavenly country, and yet love it not.

[1] parvitas

25. And these do the sons of Reuben, and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, well represent in Moses; who possessing many flocks and herds, whilst they desire that plain

country which they had seen beyond Jordan, refused to receive an inheritance in the land of promise, saying, *The country which the Lord smote before the sight of the children of Israel, is of a region most fertile for the pasture of animals, and we thy servants have many beasts; and we pray thee, if we have found grace in thy sight, to give it unto us thy servants for a possession, and make us not to pass over Jordan.* They therefore who possess very many beasts of burden, avoid passing over Jordan, because they, whom many worldly engagements occupy, do not seek for the abode of their heavenly country. But that faith, which they hold in appearance, urges them on; lest they should become inactive from the delight of ease, and should deter others, by their example, from the endurance of toil, and from studying to be patient. Whence it is said to them by Moses, *Shall your brethren go to battle? and shall ye sit here? Why do ye subvert the minds of the children of Israel.* But because they are ashamed not to defend that which they confess, they hasten to contend for that faith which they have professed; and secure it, not for themselves, but for their neighbours. Whence they say to Moses, *We will build sheepfolds, and stalls for our beasts, and fortified cities for our little ones; but we ourselves will go armed and ready for battle before the children of Israel.* And they go boldly forth at once in behalf of others, and free the land of promise from their enemies, and leave it, and return to feed their herds beyond Jordan. For many persons, although faithful, being engaged in present cares, feed, as it were, their herds beyond Jordan; because, contrary to the faith of Baptism, they are enslaved, with all their heart, and with every desire, to perishing objects. But yet, as we have said, when a trial of their faith arises, they gird themselves with the arms of defence. They overcome and slaughter the enemies of the faith, and love not the inheritance of the land of promise, that is, the fruit of faith. And they so fight in its behalf, as yet to deposit their pledges outside of it. For because they have their children without, they do not place their affection in dwelling therein. Whence they return to the plain country, because they descend from the lofty summits of the mountains, as if from the hope of heavenly things, to rear brute animals without the land of promise. Because they labour

Book XXVII. Numb. 32, 4. 5.

Numb. 32, 7.

Numb. 32, 16. 17.

Job 36, 32. diligently to supply the irrational motions of their mind with various objects of desire: because they, who are blinded with transient pursuits, know not how great is the brightness of the eternal light; and whilst they are proud of worldly things, they close up for themselves the access of the light of heaven. Whence it is now rightly said, *He hideth His light from the mighty.* But yet grace from above sometimes looks upon these mighty men, and afflicts them by the very employments caused by their abundant goods, and intersperses with their prosperity, adverse, but profitable, tribulations: in order that, when sorrowful, they may turn to their heart, and learn how vainly they are engaged in perishable pursuits. Whence here also, after the light is said to have been withdrawn, it is fitly subjoined,

And ordereth it to return again.

xiv. 26. Because the light of truth, which is concealed from proud and overbusied minds, is revealed to the afflicted and humbled. For light approaches, when the afflicted mind discerns the gloom of tribulation which it is enduring from perishable pursuits: for, if it had not some perception of the light within, it would not even see that it had lost the light. But this can be specially understood also of the Jews, who dared for this reason to speak against our Redeemer, coming in the flesh, because they were mighty in their own thoughts. But the light was hid from these mighty men; because, while they are persecuting in their pride the light of truth, they lost it. But because they are to be admitted to the faith at the end of the world, it is rightly subjoined, *And ordereth it to return again.* Whence also it is said by Isaiah, *If the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.* For the light then returns to them when they themselves return to confess the power of our Redeemer.

Is. 10, 22.

27. But if we take '*in manibus*,' not as one noun, in the dative case, but as two parts of speech[b]; it can be understood that the light is concealed *in the hands*, when the unjust are blinded in their own works in the presence of the righteous Judge. But yet it is ordered to return again. Because, when sinners have learned that they cannot be saved by their own strength, they receive the light of grace,

[b] That is, not inmanibus, but in manibus, as Heb.

and are enlightened with the rays of inward protection, so that they afterwards love their heavenly country with greater zeal, than they used before to glow with in earthly pleasure. But when we are speaking thus of our heavenly country, (in which we hear that there are hosts of Angels endowed with wondrous brightness; over which the Maker of all things presides, which He refreshes and fills with the sight of Himself, of which light is the true inheritance, and there is no failure in its brightness;) we turn our thoughts back to ourselves, and reflect that we bear about us earthly members; we consider that born in darkness, and estranged from the rays of the light within, we have lived the more sinfully, the more we were given up to bodily pursuits, and dwelt far away from spiritual objects. But a heart affected with this thought, and conscious to itself of sin, is alarmed, and despairs of becoming a citizen of that mighty country, of which it hears. Whence it is here also fitly subjoined, how the fearful mind is restored to confidence. For of this light it is immediately added, Book XXVII.

Ver. 33. *He declares of it to His friend, that it is his possession, and that he may come up to it.*

28. The friend of truth is a lover of upright conduct. Whence the Truth Itself says to Its disciples, *Ye are My friends, if ye have done what I command you.* For a friend is named as 'the keeper of the soul;' and hence he who endeavours to guard the will of God in His precepts is, not undeservedly, called His friend. Hence is it that the Truth again says to the same disciples, *But I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you.* Of this light then of the eternal country, God announces to His friend, that it is his possession, that he should not despair of himself from the frailness of his own infirmity; that he should not think what he was made, but what he was new made; but should know more certainly that he possesses this light, the more truly he is now trampling down the gloom of assailing sins. But it is well subjoined in promise, *And that he may come up to it.* For what is more difficult than for a man born on the earth, and bearing about earthly and fragile members, to ascend the heights of heaven, and to penetrate the secrets of the spirits above? XV. John 15, 14. 'amicus, quasi animi custos.' Isid. Etym. x. 14. John 15, 15.

Job 36, 33. 29. But the Maker of these very spirits has come to us, and exhibited Himself as a man, even beneath them, as is said of Ps. 8, 5. Him to the Father by the Prophet, *Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels.* And because He found between these selfsame spirits and ourselves the stumbling-block of a discordant life, with wonderful power, and with still more wonderful kindness, creating the higher, and taking on Him the lower nature, He united the highest and lowest together. Hence is it that, on the birth of this selfsame King, the bands of Angels come forth to announce Him, sing a hymn, and, the discordance of their evil conduct being overcome, acknowledge those, as citizens, of whom they before despaired: Luke 2, 14. proclaiming with harmonious voice, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.* As if they said plainly; Those whom wickedness had separated, let the Goodness now born on earth unite to us. Hence is it, that Gen. 19, 1. before His Incarnation we read in the Old Testament, that a Jos. 5, 13—16. man adored an Angel[b], and was not forbidden to adore him. But when after the coming of the Redeemer, John had Rev. 19, 10. prostrated himself to adore the Angel, he heard, *See thou do it not, I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren.* For what is meant by the Angels first patiently allowing themselves to be adored by man, and afterwards refusing it; except, that at first the more abject they knew man to be, who had been given up to carnal corruptions, and was not yet delivered from this condition, the more justly did they despise Him, but that afterwards they could not keep human nature in subjection under them, inasmuch as they beheld it, in their Maker, exalted even above themselves? For that nature ought no longer to be despised, and degraded in the members, which, exalted in the head of the members, Heb. 2, 7. deserved to be venerated. He then, Who became lower than the Angels for our sake, made us equal to the Angels by the virtue of His humiliation. Whence He also taught us by dying, that death is not to be dreaded, by His rising again, to be confident of life, by His ascension, to exult in our inheritance of the heavenly country. That so the members also may rejoice, that they are following to the same place,

[b] Hom. 8. in Evang. he names Lot and Joshua. The former, perhaps, only bowed as to guests. In judging of the latter instance Deut. 34, 10. must not be forgotten. See also Dan. 12, 1.

where they see that their Head has gone before. Whence it is well said by this our Head Himself, *Wheresoever the carcase is, there will also the eagles be gathered together.* Whence Peter says, *To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens.* Whence Paul says, *We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

Book XXVII. Mat 24, 28. 1 Pet. 1, 4. 2 Cor. 5, 1.

30. But if we also, who are born on the earth, ascend into heaven, where is that which the Truth again says, *No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man Which is in heaven?* For to this sentence, that which the same Truth says is directly opposed, *Father, I will that where I am, they may be with Me also.* But yet It is not at variance with Itself in Its words, but It inflames the zeal of our mind to enquire into these things, which seem at variance. For all we, who are born in His faith, are doubtless His body. Because then the Lord has, by a marvellous dispensation of condescension, been made the Head of His own members, He is alone, even when with us, the multitude of the reprobate having been cast off. *No man*, therefore, *ascends into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man Who is in heaven.* For, since we have been already made one with Him, He returns alone, even in us, to that place, from whence He came alone in Himself; and He Who ever is in heaven, ascends daily to heaven; because He Who remains in His Godhead above all things, draws Himself up daily to heaven, in the body of His Manhood. Let not then human weakness despair of itself; let it consider the Blood of the Only-begotten, and in its own price behold how great that is, which costs so much. Let it consider anxiously, whither its Head has gone before; and let that which is bound by His precept to good living, be strengthened to hope by His example. Let it feel sure of heaven; let it hope for the heavenly country; let it know that it is the companion of Angels, and rejoice that in its Head it has been preferred even to Angels. Let it be rightly said then of this light of the eternal country, *He declares of it to His friend that it is his possession, and that He may come up to it.* But these things are very marvellous, and

John 3, 13. John 17, 24.

Job 37, 1. very awful, that a man, born on the earth, and condemned, as his deserts demand, to separation from his heavenly country, is not only brought back to the state of his creation, but is even exalted to a more glorious condition; that he who has lost paradise obtains heaven, and that so far from the guilt of his debt being binding on him, gifts are heaped upon him more abundantly even after his sin; and that that despiser of God, and imitator of the devil, if he returns to fruitful penitence, ascends even to the loftiness of contemplating the inward light. Whose heart then would not leap in admiration of such graciousness? Whose sloth would not be startled at the elevation of so high a thought? Whence it is fitly subjoined,

Chap. xxxvii. ver. 1. *At this my heart trembled, and was moved from its place.*

xvi. 31. Because, while fear strikes the mind, it estranges it from itself, the Latin translations sometimes call an ecstasy

Ps. 31, 22. fear, as is said by the Psalmist, *I said in my fear, I am cast out from the sight of Thine eyes;* Where, namely, it could have been called not fear, but a transport[1]. But fear is in that place used for transport, because the mind is estranged from itself in fear, as it is a transport. Whence also, in this place, after considering the light of the eternal country, it is rightly subjoined, *At this my heart trembled.* As if he said, It went beyond itself in transport of admiration, and because the mind is inspired with the spirit of new hope, it has deserted itself as it used to be in its old thought.

[1] excessus

32. But it is well said, *And was moved from its place.* For the pleasure of this present life is the 'place' of the human heart. But when the place of our heart is touched with a divine aspiration, there comes a love of eternity. The mind, therefore, is moved from its place by a consideration of its eternal home, because it leaves those things which are below, and fixes itself in thoughts of things above. For before it knew not what things were eternal, it had become stupified by the delight of present things, and, transient itself, used to embrace with love transitory things. But after it knew what things were eternal, after it reached the rays of the heavenly light, by a hasty glance, being roused by its admiration of the highest objects, it raised itself from things below; so

that it now feels no pleasure except in the things of eternity, and despising transitory objects, it seeks only for those which endure. It is well said then, *At this my heart trembled, and was moved from its place.* For when the sluggish heart, which has been long given up to earthly thoughts, suddenly, by going beyond itself, attaches itself to the highest objects, it has left the place of lowest thoughts. But because the mind slumbers of itself, overcome by the love of this present world, and sleeps, in its delights, cold and insensible, unless it is aroused by the breath of Divine grace, it is necessary for him to add, how it is affected by its inward thoughts, or rather how it is restored to a sense of spiritual truths. It follows,

Book XXVII.

Ver. 2. *It will hear a hearing in the terror of His voice, and a sound going out of His mouth.*

33. It is the habit of Holy Scripture, that, when it informs us that any thing is heard with the hearing, it says that this hearing is heard. As Habakkuk says, *O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and was afraid.* Whence it is said here also, *It will hear a hearing in the terror of His voice.* But we must observe that the voice of God is said to be heard, not in joy, but in terror. Because, doubtless, while every sinner thinks of earthly things alone, and bears a heart overwhelmed with degrading thoughts, if he is suddenly touched by the aspiration of Divine grace, he understands this, above all things, that all his doings are punished by the judgment of the eternal Judge. The hearing, therefore, of the voice of the Lord, first takes place in terror, that it may afterwards be changed into sweetness. Because it first chastises us with the dread of the strict judgment, in order that it may refresh us, when chastised, with the consolation of heavenly sweetness. For when the overpowering delight of temporal objects possesses our minds, and oppresses the eyes of our mind with the sleep of sloth, if we are roused suddenly by the hand of the Divine favour, we open at once those eyes, which have been long closed, to the light of truth: we call to mind the sins we have committed, we see how strictly the Judge is coming against them; it is considered within, how great is the coming of so mighty a Judge; how great is that assembly then of men and angels: how mightily even the

xvii. read 'audivi.' Hab. 3, 1.

Job 37, 2. burning elements contend against the reprobate; how terribly that eternal sentence comes forth from the mouth of the strict Judge, with which it is said to the reprobate, Mat. 25, 41. *Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels.* The punishment of these reprobates is presented to the eyes, and the thought occurs with a heavy gloom of bitterness, what is the darkness of hell? Because then the proud heart is first shaken with terror, in order that, when shaken, it may be established in love, it is now rightly said, *It will hear a hearing in the terror of His voice.* Where it is also well subjoined, *And a sound going forth from His mouth.*

34. The sound from the mouth of God, is the power of fear, rushing into us from heavenly inspiration. Because when God, by breathing on us, fills us with thoughts of the future, He doubtless alarms us, for our past misdeeds. But by the 'mouth of God' can be designated, the Only-Begotten Son, Who, as He is said to be His arm, because God works Is. 53, 1. all things by Him, (of whom the Prophet says, *To Whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* of whom John says, *All* John 1, 3. *things were made by Him;*) so is He also called His mouth. Is. 1, 20. For hence is that which the Prophet says, *For the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken these things.* By Whom He speaks all things to us. As if the Word was plainly spoken of under the name of "mouth;" as we also are accustomed to say "tongue" instead of "words," as when we speak of the Greek or Latin "tongue" we indicate Latin or Greek words. We therefore rightly understand Him, by the 'Mouth of the Lord.' Whence the Bride says to Him in the Song of Songs, Sol. Song 1, 1. *Let Him kiss me with the kiss of His Mouth.* As if She said; Let Him touch me with the presence of the Only-Begotten Son my Redeemer. But, by the sound of His Mouth, can be designated the Holy Spirit of the same Lord. Whence it is written in another place also, as signifying the Acts 2, 2. same Spirit, *Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind approaching.* A sound, therefore, proceeds from the Mouth of the Lord, when His Consubstantial Spirit, coming to us through His Son, breaks through the deafness of our insensibility. As the Mouth of the Lord speaks of this same uncircumscribed and incor-

poreal sound, and says, *He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.* By the terror of His voice, then, can be understood the power of fear, and by the sound of His mouth the sweetness of consolation; for those, whom the Holy Spirit fills, He first alarms at their earthly doings, and afterwards consoles with the hope of heavenly objects; in order that they may afterwards rejoice the more in confidence of their rewards, the more they were before afraid on beholding only the punishments. Hence is it that Paul speaks of this Spirit of the Only Begotten, as of this sound of His mouth. *For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of the adoption of sons, whereby we cry Abba, Father.* Hence the Truth says by His own mouth, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whose soever ye retain, they are retained.* Lo! the terror of the converted is turned into power; because while they punish their sins by penance, they ascend up even to the exercise of judgment; so as to receive this power from God, which before they used themselves to fear at His hands. For they in truth become judges, who feared greatly the judgment of heaven; and they now begin to remit the sins of others, who had before been afraid that their own would be retained. But because this very judgment, which takes place spiritually, is not now seen by the carnal; there are some who consider that God is not concerned about human affairs, and think that they are carried on by accidental movements. Against whom it is rightly subjoined,

Book XXVII. John16, 14. Rom. 8, 15. John20, 22. 23.

Ver. 3. *He himself considereth under all the heavens, and His light is over the ends of the earth:*

35. As if it were plainly said; He who rules over the highest things, forsakes not even the most remote. Because His watchful rule is so directed towards the greatest concerns, as not to be kept from those which are little. For He Who is every where present, and every where equal, is not unlike Himself, even in unlike circumstances. He therefore equally regards all things, equally disposes all things, Who, though present in all places, is not locally confined, nor varied by attending to various concerns. But if we understand by the heavens, holy preachers, (as the xviii.

Job 37, 3. Ps. 19, 1. Prophet attests who says, *The heavens declare the glory of God;*) after the coming of the Holy Spirit is designated by the sound of the mouth, it is rightly subjoined, *He Himself considereth under all the heavens, and His light is over the ends of the earth.*

36. For there are some, who, when they hear the wonderful works of the Apostles, (that they raised the dead by the Holy Spirit which they had received, cast out devils from the possessed, removed infirmities by their shadow, foretold future events by prophecy, and, speaking in the tongue of all nations, preached the Only Begotten Word of God;) because they do not see these powers now in the Church, suspect that the grace of heaven has been already withdrawn from the Church, forgetting to consider that it Ps. 9, 9. is written, *An assister in needful times, in tribulation.* For Holy Church required then the assistance of miracles, when the tribulation of persecution oppressed her. For after she has overcome the pride of unbelief, she requires no longer the signs of miracles, but the merits of deeds alone, though she displays even them by many persons, 1 Cor. 14, 22. when opportunity demands. For it is written, *Tongues are for a sign not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.* Where then all are faithful, what cause demands signs to be displayed? On which head perhaps we the more readily give satisfaction, if we make some mention of the Apostolic dispensation.

Acts 28, 8. 37. For Paul, the illustrious preacher, coming to Melite, and knowing the island to be full of unbelievers, healed by his prayers the father of Publius, afflicted with dysentery and 1 Tim. 5, 23. fevers; and yet advised Timothy when sick, saying, *Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities.* Why is it, O Paul, that thou restorest the sick unbeliever to health by thy prayers, and yet healest so great a defender of the Gospel by food, like a physician? except that outward miracles are wrought, in order that the minds of men may be brought to inward truths; that so by the wonder which is visibly displayed, those invisible truths, which are more wonderful, may be believed? For the father of Publius required to be healed by a sign of power, in order that he might revive in mind, while returning to

health by a miracle. But no miracle needed to be manifested outwardly to Timothy, because he was already full of life within. What wonder is it then, that miracles are not frequently displayed, when the faith has been spread abroad, when even the Apostles themselves performed them not in the case of some who already believed? The heavens, then, having been raised up, the Lord considers inferior objects; because, when the greatest preachers have been taken away, He constantly regards even the lowliness of our infirmity. And His light beholds, as it were, the ends of the earth, under the heavens; because, after the sublime doings of those who have gone before, He embraces the ways and doings even of sinners by the illumination of His grace. And though He does not now frequently manifest miraculous signs, by the life of believers, He yet departs not from these same believers by the virtue of works. But His light over the ends of the earth can also be thus understood; that whilst the preaching of heavenly Grace gathers the nations to the faith, it has embraced within itself the boundaries of the world. Book XXVII.

38. Or, certainly, the ends of the earth are the ends of sinful men. And it is often the case, that many forsake God, and waste the seasons of their life in carnal desires. But yet, when looked down upon by Divine Grace, they turn to God at their latter end, they learn what are the eternal judgments, and punish with tears all the evil deeds they remember to have committed; and prove by their upright conduct that they are sincerely prosecuting these. And when righteousness succeeds, their former sin is surely entirely forgiven. For hence Hannah says by the spirit of prophecy, *The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;* because doubtless God does not judge the former life of sinners, when, by a look of affection from above, He enlightens their latter end. Hence Moses says, *The firstling of an ass thou shalt exchange for a sheep.* For, by an ass is designated uncleanness, but by a sheep, innocence. To exchange then the firstling of an ass for a sheep, is to convert the beginnings of an impure life into the simplicity of innocence; in order that a sinner, after having committed those deeds which the Lord rejects as unclean, may now

1 Sam. 2, 10.

Ex. 13, 13.

Job 37, 4. display such conduct, as He can offer to God as a sacrifice. Because then a sinner is converted after his sins, and is brought back at last from the darkness of his misdeeds, at the end of his life, it is now rightly said, *And His light is over the ends of the earth.* But that very grace, which fills the mind after sins, affects it with great grief. For it recals evil deeds to the memory, and shews a man how justly he is to be condemned. Whence it comes to pass, that he bewails with daily floods of tears every sin which he remembers to have committed, and the more he is now able to discern what is righteous, the more ardently does he desire to punish his own wicked self with groans. Whence it is fitly subjoined,

Ver. 4. *After Him a sound will roar.*

xix. 39. For the Lord doubtless turns into sorrow the life of him whom He has filled with His illumination; and the more He suggests to the enlightened mind eternal punishments, the more cruelly does He weary it with sorrow for its past wickedness; and a man grieves at what he was, because he now begins to discern the good which he was not. He hates himself, as he remembers himself to have been. He loves himself as he discerns he ought to have been; and now loves only the bitterness of penitence; because he carefully considers in what great pleasures he has sinned through self-indulgence. It is well said then, *After Him a sound will roar.* Because when God enters the mind, it is doubtless plain, that the sorrow of repentance immediately follows, in order that that soul may now delight in wholesome sorrow, which used to rejoice in its iniquity with a lamentable mirth. But the more abundantly a sin is lamented, the higher is the knowledge of the truth attained. Because the conscience, before polluted, is renewed by a baptism of tears, to behold the light within. Whence after the roaring of repentance, it is fitly subjoined,

He will thunder with the voice of His greatness.

xx. 40. For God thunders with the voice of His greatness, when, to us who have been now well prepared by sorrow, He makes known, how great He is in His doings above. For thunder proceeds, as it were, from heaven, when the look of grace strikes us slumbering in carelessness and neglect,

with sudden fear; and when lying on the ground we hear a sound from above: for thinking of things of earth, we are suddenly alarmed at the sentence of terror from above; and our mind, which used to slumber with evil security in things below, is now properly alarmed and anxious for things above. But we know not, in what way the terror of this secret visitation enters into us: nor is it discerned by the eye of the very mind, whose purpose is changed for the better. Whence it is fitly subjoined, Book XXVII.

And He will not be enquired into, when His Voice hath been heard.

41. The voice of the Lord is heard, when the breathing of His grace is conceived within the mind; when the insensibility of our inward deafness is broken through, and the heart, excited to zeal for the noblest love, is pierced by the voice of inward power. But even the mind, which has been enlightened by the voice of the supervenient Spirit, which insinuates Itself into the ears of the heart, does not trace it out. For it is unable to consider by what openings this invisible power flows into it, in what ways it comes to, or recedes from, it. Whence it is well said by John, *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth.* For to hear the voice of the Spirit, is to rise up to the love of the invisible Creator, by the power of inward compunction. But no man knows whence it cometh; because we are not told on what occasions it pours itself forth on us by the mouths of preachers. And no man knows whither it goeth; because when many hear one and the same preaching, it doubtless cannot be understood, whom It forsakes and casts off, or into whose heart It enters and takes its rest. For but one thing is taking place without, but the hearts of those who behold are not penetrated by it in one way: because He who invisibly modifies visible things, plants incomprehensibly the seeds of events in the hearts of men. Hence is it that some believed, when Lazarus was raised from the dead: while yet the greater number of the Jews were roused to zeal in persecution by this very resurrection. That one and the same miracle, then, which conferred on some the light of Faith, deprived others of the light of the mind, by the dark- xxi. John 3, 8. John 12, 10. 11.

Job 37, 5. Luke23, 39. 40. ness of envy. Hence is it that each of the thieves beheld that same death of our Redeemer, which was like his own; but the one feared not in his pride to assail Him with contumely, Whom the other honoured by fearing Him. In the same circumstance the thoughts of each was not the same; because the inward Arbiter, by invisibly modifying, made it to differ. But as these secret modes of breathing on us cannot be comprehended by our thoughts, the traces of the Divine voice are doubtless unknown to us. Whence it is still further subjoined,

Ver. 5. *God will thunder marvellously with His voice.*

xxii. 42. God thunders marvellously with His voice, because He penetrates our hearts incomprehensibly with His secret might. For while with its secret motions it overpowers us with fear, and fashions us in love, it proclaims in some silent manner how eagerly He is to be followed, and a violent impulse arises in the mind, though nothing sounds in the voice. And it sounds the more loudly within us, the more completely it deadens the ear of our heart to every outward sound. Whence also the soul, as soon as it is brought back to itself by this inward call, wonders at what it hears, because it feels the force of unknown compunction. And this its admiration is well signified in Moses by the manna coming from above. For the sweet food which is received from above is called 'manhu.' Ex. 16, 15. For manhu means, *What is this?* And we say, 'what is this,' when we ignorantly wonder at that which we behold. The soul then perceives the manna from above, when, roused by the voice of compunction, it is surprised at this unusual kind of inward refreshment; so that filled with Divine sweetness, it rightly responds, *What is this?* For while it is kept from the thought of lower objects, it feels unusual wonder at what it beholds from above. But because the habit of our former life is immediately changed, when the deafness of our slumber is burst through, by this voice; so that the soul, inspired by the Spirit from above, desires as highest the things which it had despised, and contemns as lowest what it used to desire, it is rightly subjoined,

Who doeth great things and inscrutable.

xxiii. 43. For that a man who was given up to earthly objects, and overpowered by sinful desires, becomes suddenly ardent

for new pursuits, and cold to his former habits, that he renounces outward cares, and is eager for inward contemplation; who can be sufficient to consider this power of the voice from above? who can comprehend it on consideration? Great are the things which God effects by His voice; but they would be less great, if they could have been searched out. *He doeth*, therefore, *great things and inscrutable:* because He exhibits outwardly the result of His work, but the nature of the work is itself concealed within. He sounds abroad with His voice, even by Apostles, but He illumines the hearts of the hearers within, by Himself: as Paul bears witness, who says, *I have planted, Apollos watered,* 1 Cor. 3, 6. 7. *but God gave the increase. For neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.* But though they do not themselves confer on our minds the hearing of the Divine voice, they are yet sent to condescend to us by words from without. Whence it is fitly subjoined,

Ver. 6. *Who ordereth the snow to descend on the earth, and the rains of the winter, and the showers of His strength.*

44. Because the Psalmist says, *Thou shalt wash me, and* xxiv. Ps. 51, 7. *I shall be whiter than snow;* what do we understand by snow in this place, but the hearts of the Saints made white by the light of righteousness? But waters are taken up, and congealed above, in order to become snow. But when this snow descends to the earth, it is changed again into liquid waters. Waters therefore are the minds of preachers; which are confirmed in a higher sense of things, when they raise themselves to contemplate heavenly objects. And when they are hurried along in the consideration of lofty things, they receive the strength of confirmation. But because they are still retained on earth by love of the brethren, they bring themselves down from their lofty understanding, and preaching humbly to the weak, they melt like snow, and water their thirsty hearts. Snow then descends to the earth, when the lofty hearts of the Saints, which already feast on solid contemplation, condescend to humble words of preaching through love of the brethren. For as snow covers the ground, when it lies on it, but waters it, when it melts; so

Job 37, 6. the virtue of the Saints protects the life of sinners by its strength with God, and by its condescension melts, as it were, and waters the thirsty earth, to bear fruits. And because water is first brought up from below, that it may afterwards be returned in showers from above; so do holy men, when placed on the lofty eminence of their virtues, consider from whence they are elevated, for fear of despising the meanness of others' infirmity. Waters, then, return, as it were, to the earth from which they have been raised, when righteous men, condescending to sinners, cease not to remember what once they were. Paul had certainly been hitherto but water on the earth, when he knew the Law carnally. But when raised up to heavenly knowledge, he was converted into snow; because he changed his former feeble knowledge into the solidity of true wisdom; and yet, condescending to his brethren, he returned as snow to the earth. For even after his heights of virtue, he acknowledges how unworthy he was, saying, *Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, &c.* Behold how considerately he calls to mind his own weakness, so as to bear with equanimity the weaknesses of others. For Paul returned, as water, after being in heaven, to the earth from which it had been taken, when, after the great secrets of his contemplation, he called to mind that he was a sinner, in order that he might benefit sinners by his humility. Let us see therefore how this water, which is to be turned into solid snow, is drawn up to its highest level. He says, *Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God.* Let us see how the snow returns to the ground, to water it, while melting. He says, *Or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.* Let us see with what hand it is guided, and can be raised up, when low, and be brought back again when raised up. He says, *For the love of Christ constraineth us.* Because therefore the love of Christ, which raises the minds of Saints to heavenly things, shapes them by its considerate control even to humble condescension, for the love of the brethren, it is rightly said, *Who ordereth the snow to descend on the earth.* Where it is also fitly subjoined, *And the rains of the winter, and the shower of His strength.*

1 Tim. 1, 13.

2 Cor. 5, 13.

ibid.

ibid. 14.

45. For this present life is indeed winter: in which though hope even now raises us up to things above, yet the

cold torpor of our mortality still binds us. Because it is written, *The corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the sense that museth on many things.* But this winter has rains, which are doubtless the preachings of rulers. Of which rains it is in truth said by Moses, *Let my speech be expected as the rain, and my words descend as the dew.* These rains doubtless are suited to the winter, and will cease in the summer; because now that the heavenly life is hidden from the eyes of the carnal, it is necessary for dew to be poured on us by the preachings of holy men. But when the heat of eternal judgment has glowed, no one will then find the words of preachers necessary. Because every one is brought back to his own conscience, on the coming of the Judge, so as to understand what is holy, when he cannot any longer perform it, and to learn from the punishment of his perverseness the right which he ought to have pursued. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, *Gather them together as a flock for a sacrifice, and sanctify them in the day of slaughter.* For the reprobate are sanctified in the day of slaughter: for they then perceive the holiness, which they ought to have pursued, when they cannot now avoid the punishments which their depravity deserves. But since holy preaching will cease with this present life, that is the rains with the winter; to the soul which is departing, and hastening to the summer regions of eternal happiness, it is rightly said by the voice of the Bridegroom persuading it; *Arise, haste, my beloved, my fair one, and come: for the winter hath past, the rain hath passed and is gone.* For as the winter passes away, the rain departs: because when the present life is over, in which the torpor of the corruptible flesh had surrounded us with a mist of ignorance, all the ministry of preaching ceases. For we shall then behold that more clearly with our own eyes, which we now hear more obscurely by the voices of the Saints. The Lord therefore orders the snow, and the rains of the winter, to descend on the earth, while He humbles the hearts of the Saints to the ministry of preaching, for the correction of sinners, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Where it is rightly added, *And the shower of His strength.*

Book XXVII. Wisd. 9, 15.

Deut. 32, 2.

Jer. 12, 3.

Sol. Song 2, 10. 11.

46. For the shower of the strength of God, is the preaching

Job 37, 7. His Godhead; for the shower of His weakness is the preaching His Manhood, of which it is said by Paul, *The weakness*
1 Cor. 1, 25. *of God is stronger than men.* And again, *Though He was*
2 Cor. 13, 4. *crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God.* But holy men so preach the weakness of His Manhood, as to pour also into the hearts of their hearers the strength of His Godhead. Let us hear, through the thunder
John 1, 1. of the cloud, the shower of His strength; *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word*
ibid. 14. *was God.* Let us hear also the shower of His weakness; *The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Let us hear the
ibid. 3. shower of His strength; *All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. What was made in Him was life.* Let us hear also
ibid. 11. the shower of His weakness; *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.* He commands therefore the shower of His strength to descend on the earth, because He so preaches to us the weaknesses of His Manhood by the voices of His Saints, as to make known to us also the wonders and the strength of His Godhead. But when we hear the power of our Maker, we are immediately brought back to our own hearts by the compulsion of fear, and, considering that so great a Judge is over us, we examine
[1] Mss. vary. what we have done (worthily, and what)[1] unworthily. Whence it is well subjoined,

Ver. 7. *Who sealeth the hand of all men, that every one may know his works.*

XXV. 47. For men scorn to think of the sins they commit. But when they hear the power of heavenly severity, they discern this burden of misdeeds which weighs them down. For being roused by the words of preaching, they keep on the watch, in order to consider to what punishments the merit of their former doings is leading them. When, then, the shower of His strength descends on the earth, a seal is made in the hand of each one, for him to know his works; because when the Virtue of His Incomprehensible Majesty is acknowledged, his own life is weighed more carefully by each person.

48. But this can also be understood in another sense. For the Almighty Creator has made man a rational creature, distinguished from all which are void of sense and reason;

in order that he should not be ignorant of what he has done. For he is compelled by the law of nature to know whether what he is doing is right or wrong. For why is he brought to judgment for his conduct, if he could be ignorant of what he has done? And therefore even they, who scorn to be instructed by the precepts of the Lord, know whether the things they are doing are good or evil. For if they do not know they are doing good, why do they ostentatiously boast of some of their doings? Again, if they know not that they are doing wrong, why do they shrink from the eyes of others in these very doings? For they are witnesses to themselves, that they know what they are doing is wrong, because they are ashamed of being seen by others. For if they did not really believe it to be wrong, they would not be afraid of its being seen by others. Whence it is well said by a certain wise man; *When wickedness is fearful, it beareth testimony to its own condemnation.* For when fear assails and convicts the conscience of what it has done, it furnishes testimony against itself, that its conduct is deserving of condemnation. The contrary to which is said by John, *If our heart condemn us not, we have confidence toward God.* Let the wicked fly then from the eyes of men; they certainly cannot fly from themselves. For that they know the sin which they commit, they have their conscience as a witness, they have their reason as a judge. In the sin therefore which they commit, they first find the judgment of their reason against them, and they are afterwards brought to the strictness of the eternal judgment. And this is perhaps that which is said by the Psalmist, *Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts.* Because, when by a wondrous course of secret dispensation, the evil which is committed is not suffered to be unknown, a sinner both condemns himself at once in his conscience by his own sentence, and after his own condemnation hastens to the sentence of the eternal Judge. For deep then to call on deep, is to pass from one judgment to another. Let holy preachers proceed then to reprove the conduct of sinners, but let wicked hearers despise the words of the righteous. Let them defend their wickedness as much as they please, and multiply their shameless deeds by a more shameless

Book XXVII.

Wisd. 17, 11.

1 John 3, 21.

Ps. 42, 7.

Job 37, 8. defence. They are certainly witnesses to themselves in their conscience that they are without excuse. For by the very fact that God has created man a rational being, He puts a seal in the hand of all men, that every one may know his own works. But because Eliu has stated his opinion of the wickedness of men one by one, he turns at once the eyes of his mind to the author of wickedness himself, by whose means each separate wickedness takes its rise; that, because he had assailed in this one verse the members of a wicked head, he might also briefly describe the head himself of these members. Or certainly, because he had mentioned above the virtues of the clouds of God, he now proceeds to set forth also the assaults of the adversary against the life of the righteous. For it follows,

Ver. 8. *The beast will enter his covert, and will abide in his den.*

xxvi. 49. Who else is understood by the name of the beast, except our ancient enemy, who cruelly aimed at the deception of the first man, and mangled by his wicked advice the integrity of his life? against whom it is promised by the words of the Prophet, concerning the restoration of the Is. 35, 9. Church of the Elect to its ancient condition, *And no evil beast shall pass through it.* But when after the coming of the Redeemer, after the voices of preachers, after the thunder, as it were, of the clouds, this beast has seized that accursed person, Antichrist, what else does he do but enter his covert, in order to abide in his own den? For that vessel of the devil is the den and covert of the beast, so that, when lying in ambush against men who are journeying through this life, he both escapes their notice by his wonders, and kills them by his malice, in his person. But yet he possesses even now the hearts of all reprobates, before he manifests himself openly; and occupies them by his secret wickedness, as though they were his own den; and conceals himself in their gloomy minds, in order to effect all the hurt he desires against the good. Were not the hearts of the persecuting Jews, the den of this beast; in whose designs he long lurked secretly, but suddenly burst forth with the voices of those who cried, John 19, 6. *Crucify, Crucify?* And because he could not reach so far in his temptation, as to wound the mind of our Redeemer, he

was eager for His death in the flesh. This beast doubtless possessed the hearts of many of the Elect, but the Lamb has, by His death, expelled him from them. Whence also He says in the Gospel, *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* For while He has, by a wonderful and righteous judgment, enlightened and accepted the confessions of the humble, He has forsaken and closed the eyes of the proud. Whence it is said to Him by the Psalmist, *Thou hast appointed darkness, and it became night, in it all the beasts of the woods will pass through: the young of lions roaring to seize their prey, and to seek their food from God.* For God in truth appoints darkness, when, in inflicting judgment in requital for sins, He withdraws the light of His wisdom. And it is made night, because the mind of wicked men is blinded with the errors of their own ignorance. In which all the beasts of the field pass through, when malignant spirits, lurking under the gloom of deceit, pass through into the hearts of the reprobates, by fulfilling their evil purposes. In which also the young of lions roar, because spirits rise up with importunate temptations, as the ministers of most wicked, but yet preeminent, powers. But yet they seek their food from God; because doubtless they are unable to catch souls, unless by a just judgment they are permitted by God to prevail. Where it is also fitly subjoined, *The sun hath arisen, and they are gathered together, and have laid them down in their dens.* Because, when expelled from the minds of the faithful, by the Light of the Truth manifested in the flesh, they returned, as it were, to their dens, when they held the hearts of unbelievers only. That then which is there called the den of lions, is here termed the den of the beast.

John 12, 31.

Ps. 104, 20. 21.

ibid. 22.

50. But I think it ought to be specially observed, that this beast is said, not only to enter his den, but to abide therein. For he sometimes enters even the minds of the good, he suggests unlawful thoughts, he wearies them with temptations, he endeavours to turn aside the uprightness of the spirit to the pleasure of the flesh; he also strives to carry out delight as far as to consent: but yet he is kept from prevailing by the opposition of aid from on high. He can enter therefore into the minds of the good, but cannot

Job 37, 8. abide therein, because the heart of the righteous is not the den of this beast. For he doubtless abides in and occupies the minds of those, whom he possesses as his own den: because he first leads on their thoughts to wicked desires, and afterwards leads their wicked desires even to the commission of most sinful deeds. For the reprobate do not endeavour to repel, with the upright hand of judgment, the suggestions of him, to whose wishes they desire to yield, by submissive delight. And when any evil thought arises in their hearts, it is cherished at once by the eagerness of delight; and when no resistance is made to him, he is strengthened immediately by consent, and consent is instantly carried into outward act, but outward act is also made worse by habit. This beast then is well said to abide in his cave; which keeps hold of the thoughts of the reprobate, till it also pierces their life with the sting of evil deeds.

Jer. 4, 14. Whence the Lord well says to Judæa by the Prophet, *How long shall hurtful thoughts abide in thee?* For He does not blame for their coming, but for their remaining there. And unlawful thoughts come even unto good hearts, but they are forbidden to remain; because the righteous, in order to keep the house of conscience from being taken, drive away the enemy from the very threshold of the heart. And if he has ever secretly crept[1] by sudden suggestions in front of the entrance, yet he does not reach to the gate of consent. It was to this beast doubtless that Peter, overcome by the impulse of sudden fear, opened the gate of his heart, by denial, but he withstood it by a speedy discovery, he closed it by his tears. But because the ancient enemy has not only entered and occupied the hearts of persecutors, but has also occupied and possessed them, let it be rightly said, *The beast will enter his covert, and will abide in his den.* For we learn how much he dwelt in the minds of the Jews, when we hear their plans, on the evidence of the Gospel narrative. For therein it is described, with what eager cruelty they raged for His death, when they beheld our Lord quickening the dead; how many evil designs they ardently wished to carry out against Him, but yet feared the people; how many opportunities they sought of killing Him, and could not find them; how many hands of aliens they

[1] Oxf. Mss. 'subrepit.'

Luke 22, 57—62.

used to carry out their cruel wishes; because they gave Him up to the Gentiles to be killed, Whom they themselves were not able legally to put to death; in order that the Roman governor might perform that by his mere power, which they eagerly insisted ought to be done, merely from their malice. Whence it is also fitly subjoined, Book XXVII.

Ver. 9. *A tempest will come forth from the inner parts, and cold from Arcturus.*

51. When Holy Scripture mentions the inner parts, in opposition to Arcturus, it designates the quarter of the South, opposite to the parts of the North. Whence it is written in this same book; *Who maketh Arcturus, and the Orions, and the inner parts of the South.* Because then the sun pervades with greater warmth the inner parts of the South, but does not pursue its course at all in the North[1], by the word 'inner parts' in this place is expressed the Jewish people, but by the term 'Arcturus' the Gentile people. For they who had known the One and Invisible God, and obeyed His Law, at least carnally, were kept, as it were, in the warmth of faith, under the glow of the midday sun. But because the Gentiles had not attained to any knowledge of heavenly wisdom, they were remaining, as it were, in the cold, without the sun, under the North. But because a tempest impels, but cold oppresses with torpor; it is now rightly said, *A tempest will come forth from the inner parts, and cold from Arcturus.* As if it were plainly said; From the Jews there arises persecuting malice, and from the Gentiles oppressing power. For the precepts of the Law had not forbidden the performance of miracles, and yet the Jews sought to kill the Redeemer of the human race on account of these very miracles. And hence when unable to fulfil what they had begun, they flocked to the hall of Pilate, in order that he, whom no law could restrain when murdering unjustly, might himself put Him to death. A tempest therefore came forth from the inner parts, and cold from Arcturus, whilst the Gentile judge perpetrated with the authority of Rome, that which the Jews requested through envy. Whence it is well subjoined still further against this same envy, xxvii. Job 9,9. [1] in Arcturo.

Ver. 10. *When God bloweth, the ice congeals.*

52. Because, as the Holy Spirit breathed on the hearts of xxviii.

Job 37, 10. the faithful, and conferred greater miracles of power, benumbing envy grew up the more in the sluggish hearts of the faithless; and the unbelieving multitude became hardened against God, from the same causes, as the humble people softened the obduracy, with which it had bound itself. For when God blew on them, they were turned into ice, who said, through envy of the miracles they had witnessed;

John 12, 19. *Behold, the whole world hath gone after Him.* They were beholding the signs, perceiving the miracles performed by His ministers, and foreseeing, that the whole world was now about to follow the preaching of the faith; and yet, the more the Holy Spirit had filled the world, the more firmly was the malice of envy binding their minds. The water therefore had been turned into ice, when sluggish Judæa was still remaining in envy, as the whole world was going after God. But because Divine Power was sufficient to soften the hardness even of such great cruelty, and to melt the hearts of unbelievers to love Him, after this ice it is immediately well subjoined;

And the waters are again poured forth abundantly.

xxix. 53. For the Lord has in truth poured forth the waters abundantly, after this ice; for after He had endured the hardness of the Jews, even unto death, He immediately melted their hearts from the hardness of unbelief, by breathing on them the love of Himself; in order that they might afterwards run the more eagerly to obey Him, the more obstinately they had before resisted His commands. Whence

Eccles. 3, 15. it is well said by a certain wise man, *As ice in fair weather, so shall thy sins be melted away.* The Prophet had desired

Ps. 126, 4. to be freed from the ice of this torpor, when saying, *Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the stream in the South.* Of these waters, that is, of people flocking together to the Lord, it is

Ps. 147, 18. said again, *He will send forth His word, and will melt them: His breath will blow, and the waters will flow.* Waters run from ice, because many great preachers are made out of hard persecutors. Ice therefore melts in water, when the numbness of inward cold is changed into the irrigation of preaching. Was not Paul ice, who when going

Acts 9, 2. to Damascus, after he had received letters, was seeking to check the seeds of the word of God, which had been scattered

in the heart of the faithful, as if in the earth, that they might not spring up to the perfection of good deeds? But this ice returned in water; because he afterwards watered with the streams of holy exhortation those whom he before endeavoured to oppress with persecution, in order that there might arise a more abundant harvest of the Elect, in so much as the shower of God was watering it from the mouth even of a persecutor. Whence it is well subjoined; Book XXVII.

Ver. 11. *The corn desireth clouds.*

54. For what are all the Elect, but the corn of God, to be treasured up in the heavenly garners? Which now bear with the chaff in the threshing of the floor; because in this purification of Holy Church, they endure the contrary habits of the reprobate, till the inward Husbandman separates them with His fan of judgment, and taking His Elect, as grains now cleaned, into the heavenly habitations, consigns the chaff to eternal fires. Whence it is well said by John, *Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* But this corn, till it attain to the perfection of its fruits, looks for the rains of the clouds, in order to its growth. Because the mind of good men is watered with the words of preachers, lest it should be drained of the moisture of charity by the sun of carnal desires. The heavenly Husbandman had beheld this corn growing up in the world, and desiring the clouds, when He was saying, *The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the labourers are few. But pray ye the Lord of the harvest, to send forth labourers into His harvest.* Those therefore which here are called 'corn,' are there called 'harvest,' but they who are here called 'clouds,' are there called 'labourers,' because holy preachers are both clouds and labourers; clouds, namely, by their doctrine, labourers by their life; clouds because they flow into us by their words, labourers, because they cease not to do what they speak. Whence it is subjoined; XXX. Matt. 3, 12. Matt. 9, 37. 38.

And the clouds scatter their light.

55. For, for clouds to scatter their light, is for holy preachers to spread abroad examples of conduct, both by their words and actions. But though they scatter the light XXXI.

Job 37, 12. of their inward message, yet they do not attain to the conversion of all the hearts which they desire. For it follows;

Ver. 12. *Which traverse all things in a circuit, whithersoever the will of their Ruler shall lead them.*

xxxii. 56. For holy preachers often wish to exhort some persons, but cannot do so. Some they often wish to avoid, but are yet most urgently compelled, by the impulse of inward instigation, to exhort them. Let us behold the cloud of God, how it is led by the hand of Him Who guides it, even to those things which it does not seek after: and is, again, kept from following its own impulse, by the hand of Him who governs it. When Paul was shaking his raiment, and was wishing to depart from the Corinthians, he surely heard, Acts 18, 9. 10. *Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city.* Again, when he had wished 1 Thess. 2, 18. to go to the Thessalonians, he was kept back, and said, *I wished to come unto you, even I Paul, both once and again, but satan hindered me.* For satan could not of himself hinder the journeys of so mighty an Apostle; but, while opposing, he ignorantly subserved the design of the secret dispensation; in order that Paul, while he wished to visit other persons, and was unable, might more suitably benefit those, from whom he could not depart. The clouds of God, therefore, traverse all things in a circuit, because they illuminate the ends of the world with the light of preaching. But, because being subject to the Divine will, they cannot fulfil their own wishes, they cannot go any where, except where the will of their Ruler shall lead them. Whence it is still further subjoined;

To every thing which He shall command them upon the face of the earth.

xxxiii. 57. For often when they are led by the will of their Ruler, they seek to do one thing, but are disposed otherwise. For they frequently desire to correct some of their hearers in a gentle way, and yet their speech is turned into sharpness. They frequently seek to be severe with others, but yet their vigour is restrained by the spirit of gentleness. As, therefore, they cannot go whither they will, so also they cannot act as they will. For because the inward Judge keeps hold of

them, when He sends them, so also does He modify and take them up, when He leads them on, so that sometimes they arrange one thing in their thought, but carry another into effect; they sometimes begin in one way, but end in another. Because then they serve according to that which is commanded them, let it be rightly said, *Whithersoever the will of their Ruler shall lead them, to every thing which He shall command them upon the face of the earth.* For they find the way of their preaching the more open, in that they are guided to it, not by their own will, but that of their Teacher. Whence it is still further subjoined;

Ver. 13. *Whether in one tribe, or in His own land, or in whatsoever place of His mercy He shall order them to be found.*

58. The one tribe of Judah is certainly meant, which is mentioned in Holy Scripture plainly and repeatedly above the rest. For it received a special gift above them all, in that it brought forth from itself the flesh of our Redeemer. But all Judæa together is called the land of the Lord. Because it then produced to Him the fruit of faith, when the whole world was in error, the Gentiles having fallen under the worship of idols. But the place of the mercy of God is the Gentile world itself, for if the strict Judge were justly to punish its faults, it would never come to the reconciliation of grace. For, when it had no merits before God, it yet received the grace of reconciliation of His sole mercy. Whence it is well said by Paul, *And that the Gentiles should glorify God for His mercy.* Whence it is written again, *Which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.* God therefore leads His clouds, either in one tribe, or in His own land, or in whatsoever place of His mercy He shall order them to be found; because at one time He conferred preachers of the Old and New Testament on the tribe of Judah only, and rejected nearly the whole of Israel by the wicked governing of their kings. At one time, He makes these clouds to rain, even in His own land, because He recalled this same people of Israel to His former favour, after correction in captivity. At another, He wished them to shine forth from the place of His mercy; because He made known by holy preachers even to the Gentiles the

xxxiv. Deut. 32, 43. Rom. 15, 9. 1 Pet. 2, 10.

Job 37, 14. miracles of His power, in order by His sole mercy to free those from the yoke of error whom His wrath in their innate unbelief was weighing down. But behold, because Eliu has perceived future events by the spirit of propheey, because he has uttered many sublime truths; the haughty man, wearied with the weight of his pride, is unable to bear the burden of what he says. For he adds at once in a boastful manner,

Ver. 14. *Hearken unto these things, O Job, stand, and consider the wondrous works of God.*

xxxv. 59. He saw him to be lying down, as it were, in comparison with himself, whom he directed to stand at the words of so great preaching. Although even by this word, "*Listen*," which he uses, he inflicts a grievous insult upon Job: because, as we have already said of him also before, it is arroganee for an inferior, to wish to extort for himself a hearing from his superior. But although Eliu does not consider to whom he is saying the truths that he utters, yet we, who seek to be instructed by all things, ought carefully to examine the words of his teaching. For perhaps it is said with great skill in virtue, *Stand, and consider the wondrous works of God.* For there are some who consider the wondrous works of God, but lying down; because they do not follow and admire the power of His doings. For to 'stand,' is to act uprightly. Whence also it is said by Paul, 1 Cor. 10, 12. *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* And they often indeed admire the judgments of heaven, love the announcements of their heavenly country, when they hear them, are astounded at the wondrous operations of His inward ordaining, but yet neglect to attain to these words by their love and their lives. They then lie, and consider the wondrous works of God, who think of God's power in their understanding, but do not love it in their lives. They turn indeed their eyes in consideration, by thinking on them, but yet do not raise themselves from the earth by their intention. Numb. 24, 4. Whence it is well said in reproach of Balaam, *Who falling, hath his eyes open.* For he had said many things of the coming of the Redeemer, and was foreseeing what things were to come to pass in the last days. But yet he was unwilling to rise up to Him in his life, Whom by foreseeing he announced. He was lying then, and had his eyes open,

when prophecy was directing his mind to heavenly things, and covetousness was confining it to earth. He was lying and had his eyes open, because he was able to behold Him from above, Whom, grovelling below, he loved not. Eliu therefore, who did not believe that blessed Job had maintained in his life that, which he professed, says, as if advising him, *Stand, and consider the wondrous works of God.* He still further examines him as to future events, and adds, as if humbling him for his ignorance; Book XXVII.

Ver. 15. *Dost thou know when God commanded the rains to shew forth the light of His clouds?*

60. If 'clouds' are holy preachers, the rains from the clouds are the words of their preaching. But when clouds fly through the air, unless rain descends from above, we know not what an immensity of waters they carry. Unless the glittering sun breaks forth amidst the rain, we cannot understand, what brightness also is concealed within them. Because doubtless if holy preachers are silent, and shew not by their words, how great is the brightness of heavenly hope, which they bear in their hearts, they seem to be like other men, or far more despicable. But when they have begun to lay open by their preaching, what is the reward of the heavenly country, which they possess within; when, oppressed by persecution, they make known in what a height of virtue they have made progress; when, despised in outward appearance, they point out by their words what makes them feared; the rains themselves, which pour from the clouds, shew us the light of these very clouds. For we learn by the words of preachers to reverence in them, with great humility, the brightness of life which they seek after. Paul was doubtless displaying this light to his disciples, when he said, *That ye may know, what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.* This light the Corinthians had known by the words of his writings, as by drops of rain, when they said, *His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.* But holy preachers frequently desire to display themselves, in order to do good, but yet are unable: they frequently desire to be concealed, XXXVI. Eph. 1, 18. 19. 2 Cor. 10, 10.

Job 37, 16. in order to be quiet, and are not permitted. No one therefore knows when the rains shew the light of the clouds, because no one comprehends when God grants the virtue of preaching, that the glory of the preachers may shine forth. He says therefore, *Dost thou know, when God commanded the rains, to shew forth the light of His clouds?* As if he said plainly, If thou now beholdest preachers about to come to the world, dost thou understand, when God urges them on to preach, by filling them with His Holy Spirit, or in what way. He makes known their brightness to the world? Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 16. *Dost thou know the mighty paths of the clouds, and their perfect knowledge?*

xxxvii. 61. These clouds have most subtle paths, namely, the Matt. 7, 14. ways of holy preaching. For *narrow is the gate, which leadeth unto life.* They confine then those by paths, who do not depart from the track of their purpose by wandering through the wide desires of the world. For the strict censure of holy living is not a broad way, but a path, in which each preacher is studiously confined: because he is carefully hemmed in by the defence of precepts. Is it not, as it were, a kind of narrowness of way to live indeed in this world, but to have no desires for this world, not to seek for another's goods, not to retain one's own, to despise the praises of the world, to love reproaches for God's sake, to avoid glory, to court contempt, to despise flatterers, to honour our despisers, to banish from our hearts the wrongs of those who hurt us, and to retain towards them the unchangeable grace of affection in the heart? All which namely are paths, but paths of greatness. For the narrower they are in this life, for guarding our conduct, the more are they enlarged to greater width in eternal retribution. Whence also it is well subjoined, *And their perfect knowledge.*

62. For it is indeed perfect wisdom, for a man to do all these things with anxious care, and to know that he is nothing in his own deserts. Whence even the clouds themselves are instructed in this perfect wisdom, when it is said Luke 17, 10. to them by the voice of Truth; *When ye have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.* It is perfect wisdom to know all things, and yet

in a certain way to be ignorant of one's knowledge; by which though we already know the precepts of God, though we are now weighing with anxious attention the power of His words, though we are doing those things, which we believe we have understood; yet we still know not with what strictness of examination these deeds will hereafter be enquired into, nor do we as yet behold the face of God, nor see His hidden counsels. How great then is our knowledge; which, as long as it is pressed down with the weight of mortality, is darkened by the very mist of its own uncertainty? Of which it is well said by Paul, *He who thinketh that he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* While we live, therefore, in this world, we then know perfectly what ought to be known, when, as we make progress in wisdom, we learn that we know nothing perfectly. He says therefore, *Dost thou know the mighty paths of the clouds, and their perfect knowledge?* As if he said openly, Dost thou now behold the lofty acts of preachers, who after raising themselves on high by their wisdom, humbly bow themselves down through knowledge of their ignorance? But since it is caused by the gift of the Holy Spirit alone, that the heart of man is perfectly informed not merely of its knowledge, but also of its ignorance; and that it glows with fervent love for things above, while it considers here below that its knowledge is of less worth, it is rightly subjoined,

Book XXVII.

1 Cor. 8, 2.

Ver. 17. *Are not thy garments warm, when the earth hath been blown upon by the south wind?*

63. We have often said already that blessed Job stands for a type of Holy Church. But all they, who are joined to it by the unity of the Faith, are the garments of the Church. Of which the Lord says to the same Church by the Prophet, *As I live, thou shalt be clothed with all these, as with an ornament.* But by the south wind, which is doubtless warm, is designated, not improperly, the Holy Spirit, for when any one is touched by It, he is freed from the torpor of his iniquity. Whence it is well said in the Song of Songs, *Arise, O north wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden, and let its sweet spices flow out.* For the north wind is ordered to arise, in order, doubtless, that the opposing spirit, who binds the hearts of mortals, may fly away. For

xxxviii.

Is. 49, 18.

Sol. Song 4, 16.

Job 37, 17. the south wind comes, and blows through the garden, that its sweet spices may flow abroad; because, while the mind of man is filled by the coming of the Holy Spirit, a notion of their virtues is soon scattered abroad from it, that the tongue of the Saints, like a garden which is blown upon by the south wind, may now justly say, *We are unto God a sweet odour of Christ.* The garments, therefore, of Holy Church are warm, while the earth is breathed upon by the south wind; because they, who cling to her by faith, glow with fervent zeal of charity, while their mind is streamed through by the breath of the Holy Spirit. But nothing hinders this being understood of this same blessed Job; because we so speak of these things in the Church in general terms, as yet specially to confine them to its separate members.

2 Cor. 2, 15.

64. For every one, who lives uprightly, and has been wont also to teach this to others, has, as it were, as many garments, as the hearers who cling to him in agreement. For it is the nature of garments, that they cannot be warm of themselves; but that, when applied to a living body, they cover the exuding pores of the limbs, they keep back the heat which flows forth from within, and from this heat they doubtless become warm: but when they have become warm, by retaining the heat they have received, they return it to the body. What then is signified by garments adhering to the living body, but the life of disciples closely united to teachers who live well? Which receives, as it were, warmth through the pores; because it is kindled with the love of God, both by the example of action, and the impulse of exhortation. Which expels, as it were, its own cold, when it departs from its former iniquity; retains the warmth it has received, because it gains strength in that warmth which it has obtained from preaching. But when holy preachers perceive that their hearers are advancing towards the love of God, they themselves glow the more in power of teaching: and from seeing that they are burning and glowing for the highest objects, they are themselves more mightily kindled to announce the good things of the heavenly country. And if at any time, because they are still passing this corruptible life of human infirmity, they are assaulted by any fault, however slightly, in deed, word, or thought, they look at the

progress of their disciples, and are ashamed of being themselves blameable, even in the smallest matters: lest they should by chance set a crooked example to those, whom they are calling to the rule of inward rectitude by the voice of preaching. When hearers then are kindled by the word of their teachers, garments, as it were, become warm from a living body. But when the conduct of the teachers also is improving, from the progress of their hearers, the heat returns, as it were, to the body from the garments which have been warmed. But let not the teachers attribute it to themselves, that they see their hearers advancing to the highest things, through their exhortation: because, if the Holy Spirit fill not their hearts, the voice of teachers sounds in vain to the bodily ears. For teachers can shape their voice without, but cannot impress it within; *For neither is he who planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God Who giveth the increase.* Let it be said then, *Are not thy garments warm, when the earth hath been blown upon by the south wind?* Because, namely, hearers, who now adhere to teachers who live aright, receive the warmth of heavenly love, when they are roused by the breath of the Holy Spirit. As if he were saying plainly to blessed Job; Thou in vain attributest it to thyself, if thou beholdest that any have made progress in virtue by thy means; because these, whom thou supposest to have become warm through thee, would be still remaining cold, in their own insensibility, if the warmth of the Holy Spirit did not touch them. But after he spake these things forcibly, he immediately subjoins words of derision, being influenced with levity by arrogance, saying,

Book XXVII.

1 Cor. 3, 7.

Ver. 18. *Thou perchance madest with Him the heavens, which are most solid, as if cast in brass.*

65. By 'heavens,' those who are created in the heavens, the angelic spirits, can be designated. Whence also we are instructed by the voice of Truth to say in our Prayer, *Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.* That the will of God may be doubtless observed in all things even by human infirmity, as it is done by the higher creation. Of whom it is well said, *They are most solid, as if cast in brass.* For it is of the nature of brass, that it is difficult to be consumed by rust. And the angelic powers, which stood fixed

xxxix.

Mat. 6, 10.

Job 37, 19. 20. in Divine love, when the proud angels fell, received this, as their reward of retribution, that they are no longer consumed by any rust of sin stealing upon them, that they continue in the contemplation of their Creator, without end to their felicity, and exist with eternal stability, in that which they were created. Which the very words of the history in Moses concerning the origin of the world will attest, when both the Gen. 1, 1. 7. heaven is said to have been first made, and this is afterwards called the firmament. Because, namely, the nature of Angels was both first fashioned more subtilly, in the regions above, and was afterwards still more wonderfully strengthened, that it might never fall. But, as we have often said, by the 'heavens' can be expressed the minds of the Elect, raised up by inward love from all earthly pollutions. For though, in the body, they dwell below, yet, because they cleave in their heart, even now, to the highest Phil. 3, 20. objects, they truly say, *Our conversation is in heaven.* Who *are most solid, as if cast in brass*, because they are not wasted away from the integrity of their original strength, by any rust of changeableness. To whom, boldly bearing up against adversities, it is said by the voice of their Maker, John 15, 14. Luke 22, 28. *Ye are My friends, which have continued with Me in My temptations.* But though this learned and haughty one, when endeavouring to make a jest of this holy man, blends noble sayings with his derision, yet he ever falls back, from those noble sayings, into empty words. For he again subjoins deridingly,

Ver. 19. *Shew us what to say to Him; for we in truth are involved in darkness.*

66. As if He said; Thou, who enjoyest the great light of wisdom, oughtest to teach us, who are involved in the darkness of ignorance. But soon starting away from his derision, he subjoins contemptuously;

Ver. 20. *Who will tell Him the things which I say?*

As if he plainly said; The unheard truths which I declare to Him, from an acute sense of His praises, who can repeat, even after he has heard them? But because, when learning and arrogance contend together in the habitation of the same mind, there sounds forth from the mouth of the speaker not merely levity of behaviour, but also gravity of sentiment;

after Eliu had been puffed up in levity by arrogance, saying, *Who will tell Him the things which I say?* he presently subjoined, through his learning, BOOK XXVII.

. *Even if a man shall speak, he shall be swallowed up.*

67. Every thing which devours any thing, draws it inwards, and conceals it from the eyes of beholders, and hurries into the deep an objeet which could be seen on the surface. A man, therefore, when he is silent about God, seems to be something on account of the reason with which he was made. But if he begins to speak about God, it is at once shewn how nought he is; because he is devoured by the immensity of His greatness, and is hurried, as it were, into the deep, and is concealed. For wishing to speak of the Ineffable, he is swallowed up by the narrowness of his own ignorance. For flesh speaks of the Spirit, the circumscribed spirit of the Uncircumscribed, the creature of the Creator, the temporal of the Eternal, the mutable of the Immutable, the mortal of the Quickener. And since, being placed in darkness, he knows not the inward light, as it really is, a man wishing to discourse of eternity, speaks as a blind man of the light. *If then a man shall speak, he shall be swallowed up:* because if a man wishes to speak of eternity as it is, he takes away also from himself even the sense he has of it when silent. But, behold! eternity then became truly known to men, when It shewed Itself to them by assuming man's nature. But because this had not yet been revealed, it is rightly subjoined of the same men; xl.

Ver. 21. *But now they see not the light.*

68. Of which light doubtless it is said even by the Prophet, *The people which was sitting in darkness, saw a great light.* But he shews how this light is seen by men, when he immediately adds; xli. Is. 9, 2.

The air will suddenly be gathered into clouds.

For the air is so diffused by its own tenuity, as not to be consolidated with any firmness. But clouds are firmer, the denser they are. What then is designated by the 'air,' but the minds of worldly men, which, given up to the countless desires of this life, are, being fluid, scattered hither and thither like the air? But the air is collected into clouds, when unstable minds are, by the grace of the Divine regard,

Job 37, 22. strengthened with the solidity of virtue, in order that, by thinking of what is right, they may gather themselves within the bosom of their heart, and may not melt away in empty thoughts.

69. Peter had been air, when the occupation of fishing for the life of the flesh used, as a transient breeze to agitate him, distracted still with earthly desires. The Apostles had been air, who had already learned exalted truths by the Law, but who as yet savoured not of strength by faith. But the air was suddenly gathered into clouds, because, through the look of divine grace, the unstable hearts of fishermen were turned into the solidity of preachers, in order that their infirm thoughts might become firm, by thinking boldly, that they might hold like clouds the waters of wisdom, and irrigate with the words of their preaching the earth lying beneath; and that, when this ministry was completed, they might return to the secret abodes of heaven, and attain, when their labour was passed, to eternal rest. Whence it is presently well subjoined;

And the wind passing over will drive them away.

xlii. 70. For the wind that passes over is the present life. The wind then passes over, and drives the clouds away; because mortal life, passing along, conceals holy preachers from our bodily eyes. The passing wind drives away the clouds: because the onward course of temporal life withdraws the Apostles from the flesh, and conceals them, from the surface of the earth, in secret rest, as if in the centre of the heavens. But because they cease not to preach even to their death, and pass through the space of this present life, like clouds, with the shower of their words, he adds what is wrought by their labours in Holy Church, when he immediately subjoins;

Ver. 22. *Gold will come from the north.*

xliii. 71. What is designated by the 'north,' but the Gentile world, fast bound in the cold of sin? Which he held under the yoke of his tyranny, who proudly said, *I will sit in the mount of the covenant, in the sides of the north, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.* And what is expressed by 'gold,' but faithful souls? Of which it is said by Jeremiah, *How is the gold become*

Is. 14, 13. 14.

Lam. 4, 1.

dim? the finest colour is changed? For he lamented that the gold was dimmed, because he beheld in some persons the brightness of innocence changed into the blackness of sin. Gold, therefore, is said to come from the north; because through the favour of the grace of the Redeemer, the life of the faithful, which is precious before God, is increased within Holy Church, from the Gentile world, which had been long frozen in the torpor of unbelief. For gold comes from the north, when the true faith in God shines forth from the very worshippers of idols. But when the Gentiles were converted to the faith, the Jewish people gainsays them; and scorns to admit to the recompense of eternal rewards, those who had been so long worshippers of idols. Whence it is said to Peter, after the conversion of the Gentiles, *Wherefore wentest thou in, to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them?* In contradiction to which, the Lord rightly says by Isaiah, *I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back.* For as the Gentile world is signified by the 'north,' so is the Jewish People signified by the 'south,' which was warmed, as it were, by the mid-day sun, because when our Redeemer appeared in the flesh, it first received the warmth of faith. *Give up*, then, is said to the north, when the Gentile world is ordered to offer to God the gifts of its faith. But the south is commanded *not to keep back*, because the Hebrews who stood firm in the faith were ordered not to condemn and reject the life of the Gentiles. Whence here also, because it was said, *Gold cometh from the north;* it is fitly subjoined;

Book XXVII.

Acts 11, 3.

Is. 43, 6.

And from God fearful praise.

72. For fearful praise is said to come from God, as if it were said to come from those who are on the side of God, that is, the faithful. When gold then comes from the north, fearful praise proceeds from God; because, while the Gentiles offered the brightness of their faith, the multitude of the faithful Hebrews praised with fear the Divine judgments. But how gold comes from the north, and how fearful praise bursts forth from those who are under God, the sacred history itself informs us. For it is written, *Cornelius, a centurion of the band, which is called Italian, a religious*

xliv.

Acts 10, 1—4.

Job 37, 23. *man, and fearing God with all his house, giving much alms to the people, and praying to God always, saw in a vision manifestly, about the ninth hour of the day, an Angel of God coming in to him, saying unto him, Cornelius. But he looking on him, being seized with fear, said, Who art thou, Lord? But he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms have come up as a memorial in the sight of God.* Gold therefore came from the north, when prayer with alms went up from the Gentiles in the sight of God. But Acts 11, 5—17. when Peter had related to the brethren, either how Cornelius had seen an Angel, or he himself had seen a linen cloth let down from heaven to him with beasts, and creeping things and birds, or how the Holy Spirit had bedewed the hearts of the Gentiles, even before Baptism, Who had never come into the minds of the Jews, excepting after the water of ib. 18. Baptism, it is immediately written, *When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, God hath therefore granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life.* The multitude therefore of the faithful, which, on the salvation of the Gentiles, restrained itself from its murmurs, by admiring the gifts of heavenly grace offered fearful praise Acts 10, 34. to God. Whence Peter himself also wonders, saying, *I have found in truth, that God is no acceptor of persons.*

73. But when the Gentiles receive the faith, why is fearful praise said to come from those who are already believers, when it ought to come from them, joyful rather than fearful? But fearful praise came from the Hebrews who already believed, on the conversion of the Gentiles, doubtless, because Judæa was justly rejected, while the Gentiles were called in mercy; and feared the loss of its own rejection, while it beheld the gain of the others' calling. Whence we also, when we suddenly behold the wicked raised up to an unexpected eminence of life, daily rejoice with fear under the secret judgments of God, lest God should desert by His secret judgments some who are counted worthy, Who calls thereby those to Himself who are considered unworthy. It follows,

xlv. Ver. 23. *We cannot worthily find Him out.*

74. Even if we can now find Him out, yet not worthily.

For whatever we perceive in Him, is of faith, and not of sight. But yet he adds that which he considers he has found, saying; Book XXVII.

He is great in power, and judgment, and justice, and cannot be spoken of.

For He is great in power, because He overcomes the powerful adversary, and taking from his house the vessels of dishonour, changes them into vessels of mercy. Great in judgment; because, though He here brings down His Elect by adversity, yet He raises them at last in the glory of eternal prosperity. Great in justice: for though He here bears long with the reprobate, yet He at last condemns them for ever. But it is well subjoined; *And cannot be spoken of.* For if He cannot worthily be thought of, how much less can He be spoken of? But we speak of Him far better, in a measure, if we hold our peace with admiration through fear of thinking upon Him. It follows, Mat. 12, 29.

Ver. 24. *Therefore men will fear Him, and all who seem to themselves to be wise, will not dare to contemplate Him.*

75. Eliu in this place calls those who are strong of understanding 'men[1].' And we must note that he says not, 'And wise men will not dare to contemplate Him,' but, *They who seem to themselves to be wise.* By which words, namely, he implies those who are skilful, but arrogant. Eliu, therefore, while he has many forcible sentiments, has touched himself in the close of his speech. For when men, who are learned and arrogant, do not live rightly, but are compelled by the force of doctrine to say right things, they become in a measure the heralds of their own condemnation, because while they enforce in their preaching that which they scorn to do, they proclaim with their own voices that they are condemned. Against whom it is well said by the Psalmist, *They were turned into a crooked bow.* For a crooked bow strikes the very person, by whom it is aimed: but the tongues of arrogant men are in their sayings like a crooked bow; because when they speak against pride, they fix their arrows in their own makers. Whence we must watch with the utmost care, lest the wisdom we receive should take away the light of humility, when it illuminates the darkness of xlvi. [1] viros. Ps. 78, 57.

Job 37, 24. ignorance, and should not any longer be wisdom. For though it shines forth in might of speech, yet it obscures the heart of the speaker with a covering of pride.

76. For some goods are of the highest, others of a mixed, kind. The highest goods are faith, hope, charity. Which, when they are really possessed, cannot be turned into evil. But prophecy, doctrine, the power of healing, and the rest, are goods of a mixed nature. For they are so placed between each extreme, that at one time the heavenly country only, and at another earthly glory, is sought by their means. We term these, then, virtues of a mixed nature, which we turn to whatever object our mind wishes for; which the mind can use when possessed, just as it does worldly riches. For through earthly riches, some pride themselves in boastful ostentation, others perform offices of mercy upon their indigent neighbours. When outward praise then is sought for by doctrine and prophecy, the height of earthly glory is aimed at, as if by bodily riches. But when doctrine and prophecy are employed for gaining souls, the riches we have received are distributed as it were to our needy brethren. Because then the mind, through want of care, keeps itself aloof from the hand of the Giver, by means of those very gifts which it boasts of possessing, we must with vigilant forethought take care, that our vices are first overcome, and our gifts afterwards secured with circumspection. For if the mind, when amongst them, incautiously forsakes itself, it is not assisted and supported by them, but is rejected, as if already repaid for its former labours. Whence also it happens, that when the virtue we possess is employed in the service of transitory praise, it is no longer virtue, because it takes service with vice. For since humility is the source of virtue, that virtue truly shoots up in us, which remains firm in its proper root, that is, in humility. For if it is torn from it, it doubtless withers away, because it loses the moisture of charity, which quickens it within.

77. But because secret pride of heart is reproved by this, which Elin says, *All who seem to themselves to be wise will not dare to contemplate Him;* it seems good to observe what great gifts of virtues David had obtained, and in all these with how firm a humility he maintained himself. For

whom would it not puff up, to break the mouths of lions; to rend asunder the arms of bears; to be chosen, when his elder brethren had been despised; to be anointed to the government of the kingdom, when the King had been rejected; to slay with a single stone Goliah who was dreaded by all; to bring back, after the destruction of the aliens, the numerous foreskins proposed by the King; to receive at last the promised kingdom, and to possess the whole people of Israel without any contradiction? And yet, when he brings back the Ark of God to Jernsalem, he dances before the Ark, mingled with the people, as though forgetful that he had been preferred to them all. And because, as is believed, it had been the custom of the common people to dance before the Ark, the king wheels round in the dance, in service to God. Behold how he whom the Lord preferred specially above all, contemns himself beneath the Lord, both by equalling himself with the least, and by displaying abject behaviour. The power of his kingdom is not recalled to his memory; he fears not to be vile in the eyes of his people, by dancing; he remembers not, before the Ark of Him Who had given him honour, that he had been preferred in honour above the rest. Before God he performed even the extremest vilenesses, in order to strengthen, by his humility, the bold deeds he had performed in the sight of men. What is thought by others of his doings, I know not; I am more surprised at David dancing, than fighting. For by fighting he subdued his enemies; but by dancing before the Lord he overcame himself. And when Michal, the daughter of Saul, still mad with pride at her royal descent, despised him when humbled, saying, *How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, uncovering himself before the handmaids of his servants, and made himself naked, as though one of the buffoons were naked:* she immediately heard, *As the Lord liveth, I will play before the Lord, Who hath chosen me rather than thy father.* And a little after he says, *And I will play, and I will become more vile than I have been, and I will be humble in mine own eyes.* As if he plainly said, I seek to become vile before men, because I seek to keep myself noble before the Lord, through my humility.

Book XXVII.

2 Sam. 6, 20.

ibid. 21.

ibid. 22.

78. But there are some who think humbly of themselves;

Job 37, 24. because, when placed in honour, they consider that they are nothing but dust and ashes; but yet they shrink from appearing contemptible before men, and, contrary to what they think of themselves within, they cover themselves, as it were, with a rigid cloak of beauty without. And there are some who seek to appear vile before men, and contemn every thing that they are, by exhibiting themselves as lowly; but they are yet puffed up in themselves within, as if by the very merit of the mean look they have displayed; and they are the more elated in their heart, the more they seemingly suppress pride. But both these warrings of the one sin of pride, David detected with great circumspection, overcame with wonderful virtue. For he teaches that, though thinking humbly of himself within, he seeks not honour from without, saying, *I will play, and I will become more vile.* And since he does not swell with pride within, because he made himself vile without, he adds, *And I will be humble in mine own eyes.* As if he said, Such as in self-contempt I represent myself without, such also do I keep myself within. What then should they do, whom teaching elates, if David knew that our Redeemer was to come from his flesh, and announced His joys in prophecy, and yet kept down in himself the neck of his heart, by the strong heel of discretion, saying, *And I will be humble in mine own eyes?*

79. It is well said therefore by Elin, *Therefore men will fear Him, and all who seem to themselves to be wise will not dare to contemplate Him.* For they who seem to themselves to be wise, cannot contemplate the wisdom of God; because they are the more removed from His light, the more they are not humble in themselves. Because while the swelling of pride increases in their minds, it closes the eye of contemplation, and by considering that they outshine others, they thence deprive themselves of the light of truth. If, therefore, we seek to be truly wise, and to contemplate Wisdom Itself, let us humbly acknowledge ourselves to be fools. Let us give up hurtful wisdom, let us learn praiseworthy folly. For

1 Cor. 1, 27. hence it is written, *God hath chosen the foolish things of this*

ib. 3, 18. *world to confound the wise.* Hence again it is said, *If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.* Hence the words of the

Gospel history attest, that when Zaccheus could see nothing for the crowd, he ascended a sycamore tree, to see the Lord as He passed by. For the barren[1] fig is called a sycamore. Zaccheus therefore, being small of stature, ascended a sycamore, and saw the Lord, because they who humbly choose the foolishness of the world, do themselves minutely contemplate the wisdom of God. For the crowd hinders smallness of stature from beholding the Lord, because the tumult of worldly cares keeps the infirmity of the human mind from looking at the light of truth. But we prudently ascend a sycamore, if we carefully maintain in our mind that foolishness which is commanded by God. For what is more foolish in this world, than not to seek for what we have lost; to give up our possessions to the spoilers, to requite no wrong for the wrongs we have received, nay more, to exhibit patience, when other wrongs have been added? For the Lord commands us, as it were, to ascend a sycamore, when He says, *Of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again;* and again, *If any man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.* The Lord is seen, as He passes along, by means of the sycamore, because though the wisdom of God is not yet steadily beheld, as it really is, by this wise folly, yet it is seen by the light of contemplation, as though passing by us. But they, who seem to themselves to be wise, according to the words of Eliu, cannot see it; for, hurried away in the haughty crowd of their thoughts, they have not yet found a sycamore, in order to behold the Lord.

Book XXVII. Luke 19, 4.

[1] lit. foolish

ib. 6, 30.

Matt. 5, 39.

PART VI.

BOOK XXVIII.

The first eleven verses of the thirty-eighth chapter are explained, in various senses, but especially in a moral sense.

PREFACE.

1. After the loss of his goods, the death of his children, the wounds of his body, the words of his wife persuading him to evil, the insulting language of his comforters, and the darts of so many sorrows boldly received, blessed Job ought to have been praised by his Judge for such great power of constancy, if he had been now going to be called out of this present world. But after he is here about to receive back yet two-fold, after he is restored to his former health, to enjoy longer his restored possessions, Almighty God is obliged to reprove with strict justice him, whom He preserves alive, lest his very victory should lay him low with the sword of pride. For what commonly slays a soul more fatally than consciousness of virtue? For while it puffs it up with self-consideration, it deprives it of the fulness of truth; and while it suggests that it is sufficient of itself for the attainment of rewards, it diverts it from the intention of improvement. Job, therefore, was just before his scourges, but he remained more just after his scourges; and, having been praised before by the voice of God, he afterwards increased from the blow. For as a ductile tube is lengthened by being hammered, so was he raised the higher in praise of God, as he was smitten with heavier chastisement.

But he who stood thus firm in his virtues, when prostrated by wounds, needed to be humbled. He needed to be humbled, lest the weapons of pride should pierce that most sturdy breast, which it was plain that even the wounds that had been inflicted had not overcome. It was doubtless necessary to find out a person, by comparison with whom he would have been surpassed. But what is this, which is said of him by the voice of the Lord; *Thou hast seen My servant Job, that there is no man like him upon the earth.* By comparison with whom then could he be surpassed, of whom it is said, on the witness of God, that he cannot be equalled, on comparison with any man? What then must be done, except for the Lord Himself to relate to him His own virtues, and to say to him, *Canst thou bring forth the morning star in its season, and canst thou make the evening star to rise over the sons of men?* And again, *Have the gates of death been opened to thee, and hast thou seen the gloomy doors?* Or certainly; *Hast thou commanded the dawn after thy rising, and hast thou shewn the morning its place?* But who can do these things, but the Lord? And yet a man is asked, in order that he may learn that he is unable to do these things; in order that a man, who has increased with such boundless virtues, and is surpassed by the example of no man, may, that he should not be elated, be surpassed on comparison with God. But O how mightily is he exalted, who is so sublimely humbled! O how great is the victory of the man, to have been foiled on comparison with God! O how much greater is he than men, who is proved by testimony to be less than God! For he is very mighty, who is proved by such questioning not to be mighty. But since we are being led to discuss very obscure questions, let us now come to the words of the text.

Job 1, 8; 2, 3.

Job 38, 32.

ib. 17.

ib. 12.

Chap. xxxviii. ver. 1. *But the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said.*

i. 1. I see it must be observed, that if the speech were said to have been addressed to one in health and safety, the Lord would not be described as having spoken out of the whirlwind. But because He speaks to one who has been scourged, He is described as having spoken out of the whirlwind. For the Lord speaks to His servants in one way, when He

Job 38, 1. improves them inwardly by compunction, and in another, when He presses on them with severity, lest they be puffed up. For by the gentle address of the Lord, is shewn His affectionate sweetness, but by His terrible, is pointed out His dreadful power. By the one the soul is persuaded to advance, by the other, that which is advancing is checked. In the one it learns what to desire, in the other what to fear.

Zech. 2, 10. By the one He says, *Be glad and rejoice, O daughter of Sion, for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee.*

Is. 66, 15. By the other it is said; *The Lord will come in a tempest, and in the whirlwind are His paths.* For He in truth is gentle, Who comes to dwell in the midst of us. But when He makes His way by the tempest and whirlwind, He doubtless disturbs the hearts which He touches; and puts Himself forth to tame their pride, when He is made known as mighty and terrible.

2. It should also be known, that the Divine mode of speaking is distinguished in two ways. For either the Lord speaks by Himself, or His words are adapted to us by means of an angelic creature. But when He speaks by Himself, He is disclosed to us, solely by the power of His inward inspiration. When He speaks by Himself, the heart is instructed in His word, without words and syllables; because His power is known by a kind of inward elevation. At which the mind when full is raised up, when empty is weighed down. For it is a kind of weight, to raise up every mind which it fills. It is an incorporeal light, to both fill the inner parts, and circumscribe them without, when filled. It is a discourse without noise, which both opens the ears, and yet knows not to utter a sound. For in that which

Acts 2, 2. 3. is written concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit; (*Suddenly there was made a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind approaching, and it filled the whole house, where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them;*) the Lord appeared indeed by the fire, but He spake to them by Himself within. And neither that sound nor that fire was God; but by that which He displayed outwardly, He expressed what He performed inwardly. For because He made the Disciples both to glow with zeal, and to be skilful

in speech within, He displayed tongues of fire without. The elements, therefore, were applied with significance, that their bodies might feel the fire and the sound, but that their hearts might be instructed by the invisible fire, and the voice without a sound. The fire then which appeared was outward, but that which gave knowledge was inward. And when the eunuch of queen Candace was sitting in his chariot, and journeying, and was holding Isaiah in his hands, without understanding him, the Spirit had doubtless said to Philip in his heart, *Join thyself to the chariot.* And when Cornelius had sent soldiers who feared God to summon Peter, Peter doubtless heard in his mind by the Spirit, *Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore, get thee down, and go with them.* For, for the Spirit of God to say, as it were, certain words to us, is for Him to intimate by His hidden power what is to be done, and to instruct in an instant, without the medium of sound or the slowness of speech, the unlearned heart of man in hidden mysteries. For because the hearing does not comprehend at once all the sayings which are addressed to it; since it understands reasons by means of words, and words separately by syllables; but our sight apprehends suddenly and at once the whole object, by turning itself towards it; the words of God addressed to us from within are seen, rather than heard; because, while He insinuates Himself, without the delay of words, He illumines by His sudden light the darkness of our ignorance. Whence also when Baruch the son of Neriah was explaining, when demanded, how he had heard the words of Jeremiah prophesying, he said, *He pronounced all these words from his mouth, as if he were reading, and I wrote them.* For he who speaks when reading, looks in one direction, but utters his words in another; because he speaks that which he sees. The Prophets of God then, because they rather see than hear His words in the heart, speak as if reading.

Book XXVIII.

Acts 8, 29.

Acts 10, 19.

Jer. 36, 18.

3. But when God declares His will by an Angel, He points it out sometimes by words, sometimes by things, sometimes by words and things together, sometimes by images presented to the eyes of the heart, sometimes by images taken for the time from the air and presented even before the eyes of the body, sometimes by heavenly substances, sometimes

Job 38, 1. by earthly, and sometimes by earthly and heavenly together. But sometimes God so speaks even by an Angel to the hearts of men, that the Angel Himself is presented to the sight of the mind.

4. For God speaks in words by an Angel, when nothing is displayed in outward appearance, but the words of the Heavenly saying are heard; as on the Lord saying, *Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee;* it is immediately replied, *I have glorified, and will glorify Him again.* For God, Who speaks without time, by the power of inward impulse, uttered not in time that voice by His own Substance, which voice, circumscribed by time, He made plain by human words. But speaking doubtless from heavenly places, He fashioned, by the ministry of a rational creature, those His words which He wished to be heard by men.

John 17, 1.

John 12, 28.

5. But sometimes God speaks through Angels by things, when nothing is said in word, but future events are announced by an object taken from the elements; as Ezekiel, hearing no words, saw the appearance of amber in the midst of the fire; in order, namely, that while he was looking on this single object, he might understand the things which were to come to pass in the last times. For amber[1] is a mixture of the metals of gold and silver, by which admixture the silver indeed is rendered more brilliant, but the brightness of the gold is softened down. What then is pointed out by amber, but the Mediator between God and men? For while He presented Himself to us as a union of the Divine and human natures, He both rendered His human nature more glorious by His Godhead, and tempered the Divine Nature to our sight by His Manhood. For since human nature shone forth with so many miracles by the virtue of the Godhead, the silver was improved by the gold; and because God could be recognised through the flesh, and because He endured therein so many adversities, the gold was, as it were, tempered by the silver. And it is well represented also in the midst of the fire, because the flame of the judgment which follows attends the mystery of His Incarnation. For it is written, *The Father judgeth no man, but hath given all judgment to the Son.*

Ezek. 1, 4.

[1] electrum

John 5, 22.

6. But sometimes God speaks by Angels in words and deeds at once, when He teaches by certain gestures, that which He declares in words. For neither could Adam, after his sin, hear the Lord in the Substance of His Divinity, but he heard the words of reproof by the Angel, of whom it is written; *When he had heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden at the wind after mid-day, he hid himself among the trees of the garden.* Gen. 3, 8. For what is it, that God after the sin of man no longer stands, but walks in the garden, except that He points out that He has been driven from the heart of man, by the inroad of sin? What by His so doing at the wind after mid-day, except that the more glowing light of truth had departed, and the frosts of his sin were congealing his sinful soul? He reproved, therefore, Adam, when walking, that He might make known to benighted souls their wickedness, not by words only, but also by His doings; so that sinful man might both hear by His words what he had done, and perceive, by His walking, the inconstancy of his changeableness, on having lost the stability of eternity, and by the wind might observe his own torpor, when the warmth of charity had been driven away, and learn by the declining of the sun that he was drawing near to darkness.

7. Sometimes God speaks through Angels by images presented to the eyes of the heart; as Jacob when sleeping saw a ladder leaning against heaven. Gen. 28, 12. As Peter caught up in trance saw a linen cloth full of reptiles and quadrupeds; Acts 10, 10. 11. for he would not have been in a trance, unless he were beholding these things with other than bodily eyes. As a man of Macedonia appeared to Paul in a vision of the night, who asked him to come over into Macedonia. ib. 16. 9. Sometimes God speaks through Angels by images taken for the time from the air, and presented before the eyes of the body. As Abraham was able not only to behold three men, but also to receive them into an earthly habitation, and not only to receive them, but to supply also food for their use. Gen. 18, 2. For unless the Angels, when announcing some inward truths, assumed for a time their bodies from the air, they would not, in truth, appear to our outward sight; nor would they take food with Abraham, unless they were bearing for our sake

Job 38, 1. some solid substance from the heavenly element. Nor is it any wonder that they who are there received, are called, at Exod. 3, 2. 4. one time 'Angels,' and at another 'the Lord,' because they, who were ministering outwardly, are designated by the word 'Angel;' and He Who was ruling them within, is pointed out by the appellation 'Lord;' that by this the power of Him Who was ruling, and by the latter the office of these who were ministering might be clearly displayed.

8. Sometimes God speaks through Angels by heavenly substances, as it is written, that when the Lord had been Matt. 3, 17. baptized, a voice sounded from the cloud, saying, *This is My beloved Son, in Whom I have been well pleased.* Sometimes God speaks through Angels by earthly substances, Numb. 22, 28. as when He reproved Balaam, He formed human words in the mouth of a she ass. Sometimes He speaks through Angels by earthly and heavenly substances together. As when He declared to Moses the words of His command in Exod. 3, 2. the Mount, He brought together the fire and the bush, and added one from above, and the other from below. But this is done, only when something is signified by this very conjunction. For what else did He point out by addressing Moses, through the burning bush, except that He would become the ruler of that people, which would feel the flame of the Law, and yet would not avoid the thorn of sin? or that there would come forth from that people, He Who would take away by the fire of His Godhead the sins of our flesh, as the thorns of the bush; and would preserve the substance of our manhood unconsumed, even in the very flame of the Godhead?

9. But sometimes God pours the virtue of His inspiration into the hearts of men, through Angels, by their secret Zech. 1, 14. presence. Whence also Zechariah says, *And the Angel who was speaking in me, said to me.* By saying that the Angel was speaking in him, and yet to him, he clearly proved that he who was speaking to him, was not without him by any bodily appearance. Whence also he added a little ibid. 2, 3. after, *And, behold, the Angel that was talking in me was going out.* For often they appear not outwardly, but, as they are angelic spirits, they make known the will of God to the senses of the Prophets, and raise them up to sublime

thoughts, and whatever events are still future they set forth as present in their original causes. For the heart of man, burdened with the very weight of corruptible flesh, enduring this its bodily part as an obstacle, penetrates not into inward things, and lies as a heavy burden without; because it has no hand within to raise it up. Whence it results, as has been said, that the subtilty of angelic virtue appears itself, as it really is, to the senses of the Prophets, and that their mind is raised up as it is touched by the subtle spirit, and that it is no longer slothful and sluggish below, but, filled with inspiration within, ascends on high, and thence beholds, as from a lofty eminence, the things which are to come, beneath it. But lest any one should think that, in the aforesaid words of Zechariah, either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, is designated by the word 'Angel,' if he considers the text of Holy Scripture, he quickly amends his opinion. For it never calls the Father, or the Holy Spirit, an 'Angel,' nor the Son, except when preaching His Incarnation. Whence it is plainly shewn in the words of the same Zechariah, that an Angel, that is a creature, was really speaking in him, when it is said, *And, behold, the Angel that was talking in me was going out.* And it is immediately subjoined, *And another Angel was going on to meet him, and he said to him, Speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited without a wall.* The Angel therefore who is sent, who is ordered by an Angel what words he ought to speak, is not God. But because, in the sight of their Creator, the ordained ministrations of Angels are distinguished by the position of their ranks, (in order that after the common happiness of their blessed state they may rejoice together beholding their Creator, and yet minister to each other according to the position of their dignity,) an Angel sends an Angel to the Prophets, and both teaches and directs him, whom he beholds rejoicing in God in common with himself; because he surpasses him both by his superior wisdom, in power of knowledge, and, by more distinguished grace, in height of power.

Book XXVIII.

Zech. 2, 3. 4.

10. These points then have been stated, to shew in what ways God talks with men. But when the Lord is said to have answered Job from the whirlwind, it is disputed, whether

Job 38, 2. He spoke to him by Himself, or by an Angel. For commotions of the air could have been made by an Angel, and these words, which are subjoined, could have been delivered by him. And again, both an Angel could agitate the air in a whirlwind without, and the Lord could sound into his heart without words the force of His sentence by Himself within; in order that it may be believed that he, who when filled with God, heard these things without words, himself uttered in words the sayings of the Lord which follow. It is therefore said,

Ver. 2. *Who is this that involves sentences in unskilful words?*

ii. 11. As we have said also in the former part, an interrogative of this kind, in which it is said, *Who is this?* is the beginning of a reproof. For Eliu had spoken arrogantly. And we say not, *Who is this*, excepting expressly of him whom we know not. But knowledge on God's part is approval; His not knowing is rejection. Whence He says to certain whom He rejects, Luke 13, 27. *I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.* What then is the enquiring about this haughty man, *Who is this?* except saying openly, I know not the arrogant: that is, I approve not of their life in the loftiness of My wisdom. Because while they are puffed up by human praise, they are deprived of the true glory of eternal retribution. But in that He said *sentences*, and added not of what kind, we certainly understand them to be good. And He asserts that these were involved in unskilful words, because they had been brought forward with language of boasting. For it is a fault of unskilfulness, to hold what is right in a wrong way, that is, to pervert the heavenly gift to a desire for earthly praise. For as it often happens that good things are stated badly and bad things properly, so the arrogant Eliu brought forward right truths not rightly, because, in defence of God he uttered humble sentiments unhumbly. Whence he deservedly serves as a type of those who within the Catholic Church are studious of vain-glory: for while they believe themselves to be skilful beyond others, they are in the Divine judgment convicted of unskilfulness; because, as 1 Cor. 8, 2. the Apostle said, *If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* For

since the original folly of the Angel was pride of heart, humility in his own estimation becomes the true wisdom of man. And whoever abandons this by even thinking great things, is the more outrageously foolish, the more he knows not himself. Whence Eliu both uttered sentences, and those involved in unskilful words, because he both knew the truth which he was speaking about God, and yet his silly pride was making foolish the things he said of himself. Having then glanced with contempt on this man, His words are directed to the instruction of Job. BOOK XXVIII.

Ver. 3. *Gird up thy loins as a man.*

12. Holy Scripture is wont to call those persons 'men,' who follow, doubtless, the ways of the Lord with firm and steady steps. Whence it is said by the Psalmist, *Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened.* Whence Paul says, *Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.* Whence also Wisdom in the Proverbs, *Unto you, O men, I call.* As if She were saying openly, I do not speak to women, but to men: because they who are of an unstable mind, cannot at all understand My words. But to gird up the loins is to restrain lust either in work, or in thought. For the delight of the flesh is in the loins. Whence it is said to holy Preachers, *Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning.* For by the loins is designated lust, but by lights the brightness of good works. They are commanded therefore to gird their loins, and to hold their lights. As if they heard openly; First, restrain lust in yourselves, and then set forth from yourselves examples of good works to others. But since we have known that blessed Job was endowed with such great chastity, why is it said to him after so many scourges, *Gird up thy loins as a man,* (that is, as a bold man restrain thy lust,) except that there is one lust of the flesh, with which we pollute our chastity, but another lust of the heart, by which we boast of our chastity? It is said therefore to him, *Gird up thy loins as a man:* in order that he who had first overcome the lust of corruption, should now restrain the lust of pride; and that he might not, from priding himself on his patience or his chastity, become more fatally lustful before the eyes of God within, the more patient and chaste he appeared before the eyes of men. Whence it is iii. Ps. 31, 24. Heb. 12, 12. Prov. 8, 4. Luke 12, 35.

Job 38, 3. Deut. 10, 16. well said by Moses, *Circumcise the foreskins of your heart;* that is, after ye have restrained lust in the flesh, lop off also the superfluities of thoughts. It follows,

I will question thee, and answer thou Me.

iv. 13. Our Maker is wont to question us in three ways; when He strikes us with the severity of the rod, and shews what great patience either exists in, or is wanting to, us. Or when He enjoins certain things which we dislike, and lays open our obedience, or disobedience. Or discloses to us some hidden truths, and conceals others, and makes known to us the measure of our humility. For He questions us by the scourge, when He assails with afflictions the mind which has been properly subject to Him in a time of tranquillity. As the same Job is both praised, on the evidence of his Judge, and yet is given up to the blows of the smiter, in order that his patience might be the more truly manifested, the more severely it had been examined. But He questions us by Gen. 12, 1. enjoining hard things, as Abraham is ordered to go out of his own country, and to go whither he knew not; to lead his only son to the mountain, and to offer up him, whom he had received, when old, as a consolation. For it is doubtless said to him, when making a good reply to the question, that is Ib. 22, 12. when obedient to the command, *Now I know that thou fearest God.* Or as it is written, *The Lord your God trieth you, to know if ye love Him.* Deut. 13, 3. For God's trying us, is His questioning us with mighty commands. His knowing also, is His making us know our own obedience. But God questions us by disclosing some things to us, and shutting Ps. 11, 4. out others, as is said by the Psalmist, *His eyelids question the sons of men.* For, when our eyelids are open, we see; when they are closed, we behold nothing. What do we understand then by the eyelids of God, but His judgments? Which in one respect are closed to men, and in another are opened, in order that men who know not themselves, may become known to themselves; so that, while they comprehend some truths in their understanding, and are not at all able to understand others, their hearts may secretly examine themselves, whether the Divine judgments do not stimulate them, when concealed, or puff them up when laid open. For Paul was proved by this questioning, who after he had

tasted inward wisdom, after the barrier of paradise had been opened, after the ascent of the third heaven, after the mysteries of *Heavenly words*, still says, *I count not myself to have apprehended.* And again; *I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle.* And again; *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.* Paul then, when questioned by the open eyelids of God, answered rightly, for he both reached to heavenly secrets, and yet stood sublimely in humility of heart. And again, when he was discussing the secret judgments of God concerning the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and could not attain to them, he was questioned, as it were, by the closed eyelids of God. But he returned a thoroughly right answer, who in his ignorant state, wisely bowed himself down to God, saying, *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor?* For, lo! when questioned by mysteries hidden, as with closed eyelids, he gave fitting and right answers. For knocking at the entrance of the mystery, because he could not through his knowledge be admitted to inward things, he stood before the gates in humble confession, and that which he could not comprehend within, he praised with dread without. Whence blessed Job is now also, after the questioning of the rod, examined by the questioning of the word, to make him consider the things which are above; and in order that, when he does not comprehend them, he may turn back to himself, and learn how he is almost nothing, in comparison with heavenly things. Let him hear therefore, *I will question thee, and answer thou Me.* As if it is more plainly said, I rouse thee by My words to consider sublime truths, and whilst thou perceivest that thou knowest not those things that are above thee, I make thee better known to thyself. For then thou answerest Me truly, if thou understandest what things thou knowest not. It follows,

BOOK XXVIII.

Phil. 3, 13. 1 Cor. 15, 9. 2 Cor. 3, 5. Rom. 11, 33. 34.

Ver. 4, 5, 6. *Where wast thou when I was laying the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measure of it, if thou knowest?*

Job 38, 3—6. Allegory. *or who hath stretched the line upon it? Wherenpon are the bases thereof fastened.*

v. 14. Behold all things are put together in historical narration, as if concerning the origin of the world. But something is immediately subjoined, which seems to be said of the creation, not of the world, but of the Church. For it is said;

Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof?

For by this, which was not done at the beginning of the world, it is shewn that that former expression was not used of the creation of the world. For some obscure subjects of a different character are blended with those that are plain and obvious, for this very purpose; that in consequence of that which agrees not with the literal meaning, that also may be examined mystically, which sounds as if spoken literally. For as, by some things which are opened we learn others which are closed; so are we compelled by those which are closed, to knock with a deeper understanding at those which we believed to be open. Let Him say then; *Where wast thou, when I was laying the foundations of the earth?* In Holy Scripture what else do we understand by foundations but holy preachers? For since God had placed them first in the Church, the whole structure of the subsequent fabric has risen up upon them. Whence also the priest is ordered, when he enters the tabernacle, to bear twelve stones on his breast. Because, namely, our High Priest, in offering Himself a sacrifice for us, when He set forth mighty preachers at the very beginning, carried twelve stones under His head in the front of His body. The holy Apostles therefore are stones on the breast, to be displayed as an ornament in front, and foundations in the ground for the first firm basis of the edifice. And hence when David the Prophet beheld Holy Church established and built on the lofty minds of the Apostles, he says; *Her foundations are on the holy hills.* But when in holy Scripture ‘foundations’ are not spoken of, but ‘a foundation,’ in the singular number, no one is designated, except the Lord Himself, by the power of Whose Divinity the tottering hearts of our infirmity are made strong. Of Whom also Paul says; *Other foundation can no man lay, but that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* For He is in

Ex. 28, 21.

Ps. 87, 1.

1 Cor. 3, 11.

truth the foundation of the foundations, because He is the first commencement of beginners, and the constancy of the strong. Because then they who have borne the weight of our iniquities are our foundations, lest blessed Job should be puffed up with pride by the power of his own virtues, he is, in the very commencement of the Lord's address, tested by the mention of holy preachers; in order that the more worthy of admiration he beheld them approach, the more vilely he might think of himself in comparison with them. But that is described by the Lord, as if already passed: for the very reason that, whatever is outwardly still future in act, has been already effected within by predestination. It is said therefore to him, *Where wast thou, when I was laying the foundations of the earth?* As if it were openly said; Consider the virtue of the mighty, and think on Me their Maker before all ages: and when thou beholdest those wonderful beings whom I made in time, consider how entirely thou oughtest to be subject to Me, Whom thou acknowledgest as the Author of Wonders without time. It follows; Book XXVIII.

Ver. 4, 5. *Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measures of it, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?*

15. Lines of measures are stretched forth in the partition of lands, in order that fairness of dimension may be observed by their very extension. But the Lord, coming to the Church in the flesh, measured out the measures of the earth with lines, because He marked out the boundaries of the Church with the subtlety of His secret judgment. The secret measures or lines of this earth were being stretched out, when holy preachers were called by the agency of the Spirit to go into some parts of the world, but were kept from approaching other parts. For when Paul the Apostle was neglecting to preach in Macedonia, a man of Macedonia appeared to him in a vision, to say, *Come over into Macedonia and help us.* But on the other hand, as it is written, *The Apostle essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not.* When holy preachers then are called to Macedonia, and are kept from going into Asia, this line of secret measure is drawn on that side, and removed from this. It is extended there, that Macedonia may be vi. Acts 16, 9. ibid. 7.

Job 38, 3—6. Allegor. brought within the limits of Holy Church. It is drawn in from hence, that Asia may be left without the bounds of the faith. For there were then some therein who were not to be gathered in: but, when they had been lost according to their desert, Asia has now been embraced within the measures of the Church, by the bounty of God.

16. Within these measures then are all the Elect, without them are all the reprobate, even if they seem to be within the limit of faith. Whence it is written in the Apocalypse; Rev. 11, 2. *The court which is without the temple, cast out, and measure it not.* For what else does the court signify but the breadth of the present life? And they who are designated by the court are rightly without the temple: and they are Matt. 7, 14. therefore not to be measured, because *narrow is the gate that leadeth unto life;* and the breadth of the life of the wicked is not admitted to the measures and rules of the Elect. These spiritual lines were being stretched in hidden ibid. 8, 19. judgment, when to a certain person who said, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, it was replied by the ibid. 20. voice of the same Master, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.* Those measures and lines were being stretched Luke 9, 59. forth, when to a certain person who said, *Lord, suffer me to go and bury my father*, it was replied by the voice of the ibid. 60. same Master, *Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.* Lo! one promises that he will follow Him, and is rejected; another demands to be released, and is retained. Whence is this? Except that the lines of heavenly judgments were being stretched over the hidden spaces of the heart, in order that their incomprehensible measures might enclose the one within, and that the other might, not unjustly, remain without. But since no one is ignorant that God stretches forth these lines of hidden judgments, why is it said to Job, *Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, who hath placed the measures of it, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?* Is the question put to remind him of that which he might know, and yet forget; that he should consider more anxiously the weight of the secrets of God, namely, that the ordering of man depends not on human strength, but on the power[1] of the

[1] manu

Creator, that so, while considering Who is invisibly performing these works, he may attribute nothing to himself, and no longer attempt any thing of himself, when he dreads the secret judgments of God? But that, considering the measures and lines incomprehensibly stretched out from above, he may remain more firm in the humility of fear, the more he sees every thing depending on the power of the Measurer. It follows; Book XXVIII.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened?*

17. What else do we understand by the foundations of this earth, but the teachers of Holy Church? For columns are raised on the bases, but on the columns the weight of the whole fabric is raised. Holy teachers are then not improperly designated by the name of bases. For while they preach what is right, and in life accord with their preaching, they uphold the whole weight of the Church by the fixed gravity of their manners; they endure sharp assaults from unbelievers, and, whatever is dreaded by the faithful as difficult in the precepts of God, they shew to be easy by the examples of their works. Whence also, when the tabernacle was being fixed as the type of the Church, it is well said to Moses, *Thou shalt make four columns, and their bases thou shalt cover with silver.* For what else is understood by silver but the brightness of the Divine word? As it is written; *The words of the Lord are pure words, silver tried in the fire, purged from the earth, purified seven times.* Bases therefore covered with silver support the four columns of the tabernacle; because preachers of the Church, adorned with the Divine word, in order to set themselves forth as an example to all, bear the words of the four Evangelists in their mouth, and in their works. vii. Ex. 26, 32. Ps. 12, 6.

18. Prophets also can be signified by bases; for when they first spoke openly of the Incarnation of the Lord, we behold them rising as bases from the foundation, and bearing the weight of the superimposed fabric. Whence also, when the Lord ordered the boards of the tabernacle to be erected, He ordered Moses that their bases should be cast in silver. For what are signified by the boards, but Apostles spread out in their extended preaching to the world, and what by the bases of silver but the Prophets: who being themselves firm

Job 38, 6. ALLEG. and molten sustain the boards placed upon them? Because while the life of the Apostles is instructed by their preaching, it is also strengthened by their authority. Whence also the bases put together in pairs are placed under the separate boards. Because when the holy prophets agree in their words concerning the Incarnation of the Mediator, they edify without doubt the subsequent preachers of the Church: and when they disagree not with themselves, they establish them more firmly on themselves. But it is not improperly ordered that the bases, by which the Prophets are signified, should be cast of silver. For the brightness of silver is preserved by its being used; when not used it is turned into blackness. The sayings also of the Prophets, because they were not held in the use of spiritual knowledge, remained, as it were, in blackness before the coming of the Mediator, because they could not be understood by reason of their obscurity. But after the Mediator, on His coming, wiped them before our eyes with the hand of His Incarnation, whatever light was lurking therein shone forth, and He brought into use the meaning of preceding fathers, because He expounded words by events. Whether He signifies then the prophets, or the teachers who succeed them in the latter times, by the expression 'bases,' let Him say; *Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened?* Thou understandest, except upon Me, Who hold all things marvellously together, and confer at the first an inward existence on things that are good without. For he who attributes what is good to himself, is not a solid basis; for whilst he rests not on the foundation, he is by his own weight precipitated to the bottom. But since many things are now being said concerning the building of Holy Church, the mind seeks to hear, with what virtue hostile nations are united together, that is, with what skill the different buildings of this house are fitted together. It follows;

Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof?

viii. 19. It is now clear to all by Divine grace, Whom Holy Scripture calls the corner Stone. Him in truth, Who taking into Himself from one side the Jewish, and from the other the Gentile people, unites, as it were, two walls in the one fabric of the Church; Him of Whom it is written, *He hath made both one;* Who exhibited Himself as the corner Stone,

Eph. 2, 14.

not only in things below, but in things above; because He united on earth the nations of the Gentiles to the people of Israel, and both together to Angels in heaven. For at His birth the Angels exclaimed, *On earth peace to men of good will.* For they would not offer their joys to men of peace as a great thing at the birth of the King, if they were not at variance with each other. Of this Stone it is said by the Prophet; *The Stone which the builders rejected, is made the head of the corner.* Jechonias the king typified the Stone, whom Matthew when describing fourteen generations, reckoned twice. For him, whom he had inserted as the end of the second generation, he inserted again at the beginning of the third. For he himself was removed into Babylonia with the people of Israel; for while he is led from one to the other, he is not improperly counted twice over for the side of each wall. And by the bending of this migration he designates the corner stone. For where the order is diverted from its right course to go into a different direction, it makes, as it were, a corner. He could therefore rightly be counted twice; for he shewed as it were two sides of himself along either wall. Whence also he properly represented Him, Who born in Judæa, and gathering together the Gentiles, went as it were from Jerusalem to Babylonia, and bound together in His own Person, by the art of charity, that building of faith which before was rent asunder by the animosity of discord.

Book XXVIII.

Luke 2, 14.

Ps. 118, 22. Matt. 1, 11. 12.

But these things which have been said, as descriptive of Holy Church, it seems good to repeat briefly in a moral sense. For it is right for us to be brought back to our own hearts by those things which we know were said to blessed Job; because the mind then understands more truly the words of God, when it searches for itself therein. For behold it is said,

Mor.

Ver. 4. *Where wast thou when I was laying the foundations of the earth?*

20. If the mind of a sinner is dust, which is borne on the surface, and is swept away by the breeze of temptation, (whence it is written, *Not so are the ungodly, not so; but as the dust, which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth;*) nothing prevents the earth being understood to mean

ix.

Ps. 1, 4.

Job 38, 4. 5. Mor. Heb. 6, 7.

the soul of a just man, of which it is written, *For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth the herbs meet for those by whom it is dressed, receiveth a blessing.* But the foundation of this earth is faith. The foundation of this earth is laid, when the first cause of firmness, the fear of God, is breathed in the secret places of the heart. This man does not as yet believe the eternal truths which he hears; when faith is given him, a foundation is now laid for the building up of the subsequent work. He now believes eternal truths, but yet fears them not; he despises the terror of the coming judgment: he boldly involves himself in sins of the flesh and of the spirit. But when the fear of future things is suddenly infused into him, in order that the edifice of a good life may rise up, the foundations are now erected. When the foundation then of a wholesome dread has been laid, and the fabric of virtue is being raised on high, it is necessary for every one to measure his strength, as he is making progress. So that though he has already begun to be great by the Divine building, he may without ceasing look back to what he was; in order that humbly remembering what he was found in merit, he may not arrogate to himself what he has been made by grace. Whence also blessed Job is now brought back to himself by the voice from above, and, that he may not dare to boast of his virtues, he is reminded of his past life. And it is said to him, *Where wast thou when I was laying the foundations of the earth?* As if the Truth openly said to the justified sinner; Attribute not to thyself the virtues which were received from Me. Exalt not thyself against Me by reason of My own gift. Call to mind where I found thee, when I laid the first foundations of virtue in thee, in My fear. Call to mind where I found thee, when I confirmed thee in My fear. In order then that I may not destroy in thee that which I have built up, thou must not cease to consider with thyself, what I found thee. For whom has the Truth not found either in sins or excesses? But after this we can well preserve that which we are, if we never neglect to consider what we were. But pride is yet sometimes wont to steal secretly even into careful hearts, so that the thought of good deeds, though slight and feeble, as it advances to a

great height of virtue, forgets its own infirmity, and does not recall to mind what it was in sins. Whence also Almighty God, because He sees that our weakness is increased even by salutary remedies, places limits to our very progress, that we may have some excellencies of virtues, which we have never sought for, and that we may seek after others, and yet be unable to possess them. In order that our mind, when unable to attain these things which it desires, may understand that it possesses not of itself those even which it does possess, and that, from those which are present, those which are wanting may be thought of, and that, by means of those that are profitably wanting, those goods that are present may be humbly preserved. Whence also it is rightly subjoined, concerning His dealings towards this earth, that is, this righteous soul; BOOK XXVIII.

Ver. 4, 5. *Declare to Me if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measure thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?*

21. For who, but our Creator, lays the measures of this earth? Who, by the secret ordering of His inward judgment, gives to one the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another perfect faith, to another the grace of healing, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of speeches; in order that one man may by one and the same Spirit be mighty in the word of wisdom, and yet not be strengthened with the speech of knowledge, that is, of doctrine, (for he is able to understand and discover even that truth which he does not attain to by study and learning;) and that another may shine with the word of knowledge, and yet not be strong in the word of wisdom, because he is able fully to understand all that he has learnt, and yet cannot rise by himself to understand any subtle question. One man by faith commands the elements, and yet cures not bodily infirmities by the gift of healing. Another removes diseases by the aid of prayer, and yet restores not by his word the rain to the thirsty earth. This man restores even the dead at once to present life, by the working of miracles, and yet, not possessing the gift of prophecy, knows not what things are to befal him. X. 1 Cor. 12,8-10.

Another beholds all future events as if present, and yet does not display himself in any working of miracles. One man by the discerning of spirits subtilly discerns the minds of men in their doings, but yet knows not tongues of divers kind; another examines into tongues of divers kind, but yet observes not dissimilar hearts in similar doings. One person skilfully examines by interpretation the value of words in one language which he knows, and yet patiently goes without the other goods which he has not.

Job 38, 4. 5. Mor.

22. Thus, therefore, does our Creator and Disposer order all things; that he who might be puffed up by the gift which he has, may be humbled by that virtue which he has not. He so regulates all things, that when He exalts any one by the grace bestowed, He also, by a different gift, makes one person inferior to another, and makes every one to look on him who is beneath him, as superior to him in some other gift, and though he feels that he is even in some respects superior, to place himself in others below the very person whom he surpasses. He so regulates all things, that while all possess separate gifts, they become, all of them, the property of each person separately, by a connecting bond of charity, and that every one so possesses in another that which he has not himself, that he humbly confers on the other that which he received as his own possession. For it is hence said by Peter, *As every one hath received the gift, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.* For the manifold grace of God is then well dispensed, when the gift which has been received is believed to belong even to him who does not possess it, when it is considered to have been given to a man's self on account of him in whose behalf it is exerted. Hence it is said by Paul, *By love serve one another.* For charity then sets us free from the yoke of blame, when it engages us through love in mutual service, when we both believe that the goods of others belong to ourselves, and present our goods to others as though offering them their own. Hence it is again said by Paul, *For even the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am therefore not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the*

1 Pet. 4, 10.

Gal. 5, 13.

1 Cor. 12, 14—17.

body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? And a little after, *But if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.* Book XXVIII. 1 Cor. 12, 19. 20.

23. For what is Holy Church, except the Body of its own heavenly Head? Wherein one is the eye, by beholding lofty things; another a hand, by performing right things; another a foot, by running to and fro at command; another an ear, by understanding the voice of the precepts; another a nose, by discerning the foulness of wicked, and the fragrance of good, deeds. And, while they receive and discharge mutual offices, like the limbs of the body, they make of themselves together one single body, and, while they perform different offices in charity, they keep that from being different, in which they are bound together. But were they all to do one and the same work, they would assuredly not be a body, which is composed of many members; because, namely, it would not exist, as compacted of many parts, if this harmonious diversity of members did not bind it together. Because then the Lord divides to the holy members of His Church the gifts of virtues, He places the measures of the earth. Whence Paul says again, *As God hath divided to every one the measure of faith.* And again, *From Whom the whole body compacted and connected by that which every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every member, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.* Rom. 12, 3. Eph. 4, 16.

24. But since our Creator and Disposer with wonderful wisdom confers gifts on one, which He refuses to another, and refuses to one those gifts which He bestows on another; whoever aims at doing more than he has received, endeavours to exceed the limits assigned to him. As if, perchance, he, to whom it has been only given to discuss the secret meanings of precepts, should attempt also to dazzle with miracles; or, as if he, whom the gift of heavenly virtue strengthens only for miracles, should strive, besides, to lay open the mysteries of the Divine Law. For he puts forth his foot on a precipice, who regards not the limits of his own measures. And he who boldly hastes to grasp those subjects which he

Job 38, 4. 5. Mor. is unable to reach, commonly loses that power which was his. For we then use aright the services of our limbs, when we distinctly preserve for them their own offices. For with the eyes we behold the light, with the ears we hear a voice. But if any one, having inverted the order, applies his eyes to the voice, and his ears to the light, both are to him open in vain. If any one wishes to distinguish scents with his mouth, to taste flavours with his nose, he does away with the service of both senses, because he perverts them. For when they are not applied to their proper uses, they both give up their own offices, and do not attain to those which are foreign to them.

25. The Prophet David, then, had rightly confined the foot of his heart within the measure he had received by the Ps. 131, 1. Divine bounty, when he said, *I have not walked in great matters, nor in things too wonderful for me.* For he would in truth walk in things too wonderful for him, if he sought to appear mighty beyond his power. For a man is raised above himself in wonderful things, if he endeavours to appear capable even in those things, to which he is unequal. Paul also was rightly confining himself within these limits, even in Rom. 15, 18. the wide range of his preaching, when he said, *For I do not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ worketh not by me.* But the measure which has been received is then rightly preserved, when the life of spiritual men is viewed as set before the eyes. Whence it follows;

xi. Ver. 5. *Or who hath stretched the line upon it?*

26. For a line is stretched over this earth, when the examples of preceding Fathers are pointed out to each Elect soul, as a rule of life to be adopted; in order for it to consider from their life what to maintain in its own doings; that so, by observing the track of the proper path, it may neither, through neglect, fall short of the smallest matters, nor, through pride, stretch forth beyond the greatest; nor endeavour to do less than it is able, nor grasp at more than it has received; lest it should either not attain to the measure which it ought, or should, by forsaking this measure, fall Matt. 7, 14. beyond its limit. For narrow in truth is the gate which leadeth to life, and he enters therein, who is, on account of it, carefully confined in all his doings, by his subtlety of

discernment. For he who with fearless mind spreads himself abroad through his own wishes, condemns himself to exclusion from the narrow gate. In order, then, for the measure of this earth to be preserved, a line is extended over it from heaven; because the discriminating life of the Saints is spread out before us in Holy Scripture, in order that, either our defects may be corrected, or our excesses moderated; and both what, and how much, is to be done, is marked out by their discrimination which is set before us. BOOK XXVIII.

27. Behold a person, fearing either the loss of goods, or bodily affliction, dreads the threats of worldly power, and presumes not to maintain the truth against the might of opponents. Because Peter beholds him hard pressed with fear, he brings him back to the wide space of virtue, by putting before him the line of his examples. For when he had been scourged by the chiefs of the people, and perceived that he had been set free, on condition that he should cease from preaching, when he was commanded not to speak for the future, he did not yield even for the time. For he immediately answered and said, *We ought to obey God rather than men.* And again, *For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* But he, who before was weak, and fearing present loss, when he contemplates examples of such great courage, now follows the course of Peter, through the authority of the word, now fears not any adversity, and contemns, even with laceration of body, the powers of the world, which oppose God. But yet the more he overcomes the strength of his persecutors by bold endurance, and the more, in the midst of adversities, he yields not to any terms, the more does he in general set himself above others, even in the opinions he has held, when placed among the faithful; the more does he choose his own schemes, and trust himself, rather than others. He doubtless, while exerting himself in virtue, by not yielding to unrighteous opposition, places his foot beyond the proper limit, by not adopting even the right advice of others. Him does Peter recall within the line of measure, who, after he had overcome the authority of rulers by the freedom of his words, listened, through humility of heart, to Paul's advice about not circumcising the Gentiles. For he desired so to raise himself up Acts 4, 18; 5, 40. Acts 5, 29. Acts 4, 20.

Job 38, 5. Mor. against the adversaries by his authority, as yet not to trust himself in those points in which he was wrong; in order that he might overcome haughty powers by the freedom of his boldness, and might exhibit by the humility of his gentleness submission in good counsel even to his younger brethren; and thus at one time oppose himself to others, and at another together with others oppose himself. In the conduct then of Peter a line of authority and humility is extended as it were before our eyes, lest our mind should not attain to the standard through fear, or should exceed the limit through pride.

28. It has been stated, how the line is extended, lest we should fall into a fault in another case, through the boldness of some of our doings. Let it be now stated how we abandon the line of discretion in one and the same virtue, if we know not how to perform it at one time, and how to defer it at another. For a virtue is not always one and the same thing, for the merits of actions are often changed by circumstances. It is hence the case, that when we are properly engaged in any pursuit, we often more properly desist from it; and that the mind more creditably abandons that employment for a time, in which it was creditably employed at its own proper time. For if in consequence of our lesser virtues, (by performing which we make progress, but by intermitting which we are not endangered,) greater evils and trials threaten our neighbours, we necessarily put aside our advance in virtue, lest we should cause losses to the faith in our weaker neighbours; lest what we do should so far not be a virtue, the more it overthrows the foundations of the faith in the hearts of others, for the sake of itself.

29. Which line of sound judgment Paul rightly extended before the eyes of the beholders, who both ordered the Gentiles who were coming to the liberty of the faith not Gal.5,2. to be circumcised, and yet, when at Lystra, and passing Acts 16, 3. through Iconium, himself circumcised Timothy, who had been born of a Gentile father. For, seeing that he would excite the rage of the Jews even against those who were then present as his companions, if he did not shew that he observed the commands of the letter, he deferred enforcing his assertion, and secured himself and his companions from

fierce persecution without loss to the faith. He did that which he ordered not to be done from love to the faith; but he brought back to the service of the faith that which he did as it were unfaithfully. For a virtue is frequently lost, when it is maintained indiscreetly, and when it is discreetly intermitted, it is held the more firmly. And it is no wonder if we understand that that takes place in incorporeal, which we see taking place also in bodily, things. For a bow is intentionally unstrung, in order that at its proper time it may be usefully bent. And if it receives not the rest of being unstrung, it loses its power of striking, from being kept on the stretch. And thus sometimes when a virtue, which is in exercise, is suspended through discretion, it is reserved; in order that it may afterwards strike vices the more powerfully, the more it prudently abstains meanwhile from striking. The subtle line of sound judgment is, therefore, then extended over the earth, when, by setting before each soul the examples of preceding fathers, a virtue is both profitably excited to action, and is sometimes also more profitably restrained. BOOK XXVIII.

30. But when boldness of zeal is withdrawn for a while from employment, great consideration is needed, lest we should perchance cease from the exercise of virtue, not from regard to the common good, but through fear for ourselves, or for the sake of some object of ambition. For when this is the case, a man no longer gives way to dispensation, but to sin. Hence when a person so dispenses the work he has undertaken as to cease from virtuous exertion, he must take anxious care, and examine himself first in the depth of his heart, lest he should by this greedily seek something for himself, by this should spare himself alone through fear; and lest the result of his work should turn out ill, as not produced from a proper intention of thought. Whence the Truth well says in the Gospel, *The light of thy body is thine eye; if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.* For what is expressed by the 'eye,' except the intention of the heart going before its work? which, before it exercises itself in action, already contemplates that which it desires. And what is designated by Matt. 6, 22. 23.

Job 38, 6. Mor. the expression 'body,' except each single action, which follows its intention as the eye with which it sees? *The light of the body*, therefore, *is the eye*, because the merits of an action are enlightened by the ray of good intention. *And if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light*, because, if in the singleness of our thought we intend rightly, a good work is produced, even though it seem not good. *And if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness*, because, when even any thing that is right is performed from a wrong intention, though it seem brilliant before men, it is yet obscured by the sentence of the inward Judge. Whence it is rightly subjoined, *Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?* Because, if we obscure by bad intention that which we believe we are doing rightly, how great are those evils, which we are ignorant are evils even when we are doing them? And, if we see nothing in that case, when we hold, as it were, the light of discernment, how blindly do we stumble against those sins which we commit without discernment? Through all our doings then our intention must be considered with watchful care, that it choose not, in what it does, any thing temporal, but that it fix itself entirely on the solid foundation of eternity; lest the fabric of our deeds, if built out beyond the foundation, should be rent asunder by the yawning earth. Whence it is here also fitly subjoined,

Luke 11, 35. Matt. 6, 23.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened?*

xii. 31. For the bases of each single soul are its intentions. For as the fabric rests on columns, but the columns on bases, so is our life based upon its virtues, but our virtues on our inmost intention. And because it is written, *Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*; the bases are then on the foundation, when our intentions are firmly fixed on Christ. But in vain do the bases raise upon themselves lofty edifices, if they themselves do not stand firm on the solid foundation, because men doubtless perform in vain their deeds, however great, if the intentions of their hearts are turned aside beyond the certainty of eternity, and if they seek not the rewards of the

1 Cor. 3, 11.

true life, and they raise up upon themselves heavier losses of ruin, the loftier edifices they pile up beyond the foundation. For when they aim not at the rewards of eternal life, the more they raise themselves, as it were, in virtue, the deeper do they fall into the pitfall of vainglory. We must not consider then what the bases support, but where they are supported: because in truth the hearts of men examine, by Divine help, not only what they do, but what they aim at in their doings. Whence, when Paul was describing the strict Judge, and was speaking of the goodness of actions, saying, *Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to these indeed according to their patience in well-doing, glory and incorruption;* because, having spoken of patience in well doing, he had mentioned the whole fabric, as it were, of Elect actions, he immediately enquired accurately where the bases of this fabric rested, saying, *To those who seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life.* As if he were plainly saying, Although certain persons exhibit patience in well-doing, yet they receive not glory and incorruption, if they place not the intentions of their heart, that is the bases of the fabric, on the foundation. Because, namely, God dwells not in the edifice even of an honest life, which, placed without Himself, He Himself does not support.

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Rom. 2, 6. 7.

32. Because, therefore, the intentions of every Elect soul rest on the hope of eternity, it is rightly said of this earth by the voice of the Lord, *Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened?* As if He were plainly saying, Except upon Me. For while every righteous soul aims at this, every thing it does temporally, it doubtless builds on Me for no temporal purpose. But since we are then more solidly built on the foundation, when we both follow the words of God in their outward precepts, and consider them with deeper understanding in their inmost meanings, it is rightly subjoined,

Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof?

33. For the 'corner stone' is a twofold understanding of Holy Scripture. And it is laid by Divine power, when it is not, by strict judgment, bound with the darkness of its ignorance, but enjoys a kind of liberty, whereas it knows sufficiently the precepts of God, either to follow their

xiii.

Job 38, 7. Mor. outward commands, or to learn by contemplation their inner meaning. To which our understanding would never attain, if He, our Creator, did not come to take our nature. For He is called in one sense 'a corner stone,' because He united in Himself two peoples, and in another, because He set forth in Himself patterns of both lives, that is, the active and the contemplative, united together. For the contemplative life differs very much from the active. But our Redeemer by coming Incarnate, while He gave a pattern of both, united both in Himself. For when Luke 6, 5. He wrought miracles in the city, and yet continued all night in prayer on the mountain, He gave His faithful ones an example, not to neglect, through love of contemplation, the care of their neighbours, nor again to abandon contemplative pursuits, from being too immoderately engaged in the care of their neighbours; but so to keep together their mind, in applying it to the two cases, that the love of their neighbour might not interfere with the love of God, nor again the love of God cast out, because it transcends, the love of their neighbour. Because then the Mediator between God and man was manifested to the heart of man, when it knew not what it was doing, in order by His doings to set in order things transitory, and to shew by contemplation whence all things depended, it is rightly said, *Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof?* As if the Lord were openly saying, Except Myself, Who manifested in time for the salvation of men, Him Whom I begat as My only Son without time, that men might learn in His life that even diverse pursuits are not discordant. And it must be observed, that He does not state that He sent Him out, but that He sent Him away [1]. Because in truth the Son, in taking human nature, descended from a lofty, to the lowest, estate. But since even the Elect Angels, who are not redeemed by this mystery, yet marvelled at the mystery of this Incarnation, it is rightly subjoined,

[1] Non emisisse, sed dimisisse.

1 Pet. 1, 12.

Ver. 7. *When the morning stars were praising Me together.*

xiv. 34. For because the nature of rational spirits is believed to have been created first in time, the Angels are, not improperly, called 'morning stars.' But if this is so, whilst the earth was invisible, and in disorder, whilst darkness was over the

abyss, they anticipated in their existence the coming day of the following age through the light of wisdom. Nor must we hear negligently the word 'together' which is added; because the morning stars doubtless praise, together with those of the evening, the power of the Redeemer, while the Elect angels glorify even with redeemed men in the end of the world the bounty of heavenly grace. For in order to excite us to praise our Creator, when the Light arose in the flesh, they proclaimed this which we before mentioned; *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.* They praise then together, because they adapt to our redemption the words of their exultation. They praise together, because when they behold us admitted, they rejoice that their own number is filled up. But they are therefore perhaps also termed 'morning stars,' because they are frequently sent to exhort men, and while they announce the coming morn, they drive away from the hearts of men the darkness of the present life. But behold Angels praise the Divine Power, because the very sight of such great brightness expands them. But with what virtue do we, who though ransomed, are yet weighed down by the corruption of the flesh, praise the gift which we receive? For how will our tongue be able to speak of that, which our mind is unable to understand? It follows,

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Luke 2, 14.

And all the sons of God exulting for joy.

35. For it is called 'exultation,' when the joy of the heart is not fully expressed by the power of the voice, but when he who rejoices makes known in certain ways the joy which he can neither conceal, nor fully express. Let Angels therefore praise, who now behold above the loftiness of such great brightness. But let men exult, who still suffer here below the straitness of their speech. But because the Lord knew that these things would certainly happen, He does not speak of them as about to occur, but rather relates them as having occurred. But how is it that, when the good exult in the mystery of their redemption, envy inflames the wicked, and that whilst the Elect make progress, the reprobate are roused to furious madness, and persecute their rising virtues, because they do not wish to imitate them? And yet He Who has redeemed, forsakes us not even among these trials.

XV.

Job 38, 8. 9. / 1 Cor. 10, 13. For it is written; *But God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* For our Creator knows when to suffer the storm of temptation to arise, when to restrain it on rising. He knows how to restrain, in order to our protection, that which He allows to come forth against us for our exercise; that the raging storm may wash over, and may not overwhelm us. Whence also it follows;

Ver. 8. *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it was breaking forth, as if proceeding from the womb?*

xvi. ALLEG. 36. For what do we understand by the 'sea,' but the world, and what by the 'womb,' but the corruption of carnal thoughts? For in this place by the word 'womb' is designated the secret and evil thought of carnal things. And this womb conceives not a bodily substance in order to produce offspring, but a cause of sorrow, in order to fulfil its wickedness. Of this womb of the heart of the wicked it is said in Ps. 7, 14. another place, *He hath conceived sorrow, and hath brought forth iniquity.* By this womb do the wicked conceive when they think evil things. By this womb do they bring forth, when they execute the evils they have thought. The sea then was bursting forth, as if proceeding from the womb, when the waves of worldly threats, conceived in the iniquity of carnal thoughts, were raging for the destruction of Holy Church. But, by God's help, this sea was shut up with doors, because holy men were opposed as a kind of door, against the pride of persecutors, in order that the wrath of persecutors might be crushed by their miracles, and reverence. For when the princes of this world had been brought low, the Lord exalted Holy Church, by their means, above the height of the world, and restrained the assaults of the raging sea, by having raised up the power of the same Church. But let us hear what the Lord did to this raging sea. It follows;

Ver. 9. *When I was making a cloud the garment thereof, and was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes.*

xvii. 37. The raging sea is covered with a 'cloud,' because the cruelty of persecutors is covered with the veil of their own folly. For it is unable to behold the clear light of truth,

from the interposed darkness of their unbelief; and through the desert of its own blindness, it knows not what it is doing by the impulse of cruelty. *For had they known,* as says the Apostle, *they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.* This cloud is wont to cover not only the unbelievers who are placed without the Church, but also to obscure those who live in a carnal manner within it. Whence holy men, who sympathize even with others' negligence, and think that they themselves are also suffering that which they perceive others enduring, pray to God, and say, *Thou hast placed a cloud before Thee, that our prayer should not pass through.* As if they openly said, To our mind accustomed to worldly pleasures Thou presentest, by a righteous judgment, the phantoms of its cares, by which Thou confusest it, in the very earnestness of its prayer; and that which Thou art not ignorant is given up to the most degrading desires, Thou rightly repellest, when blinded, from beholding the brightness of Thy light; so that when it reaches towards Thee, it is turned away from beholding Thee, by the cloud of its own thoughts; and that that which constantly thinks on these worldly subjects, because it wishes for them, may endure them also in its prayer, when it does not wish for them. Because then the very wickedness of persecutors is so restrained by God's ordering, as not to burst forth as much as it wishes against holy men; after He said, *When I was laying the cloud as the garment thereof,* He fitly subjoined, *And was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes.* For the feet and arms are bound with swaddling clothes, lest they should be thrown about hither and thither with unrestricted liberty. Because, therefore, the persecutors of Holy Church, restless from their instability of heart, and devoted to this world, savour not the things of age, but of childhood; they who are fast bound by darkness and obscurity, (not by a sense of the Divine judgment,) so as to be unable to persecute as much as they wish, are said to be wrapped in swaddling clothes. Because, as has been said, they savour of childish things, and yet, constrained by the Divine dispensation they do not stretch forth their arms wherever they please; and if they desire lightly to perpetrate

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1 Cor. 2, 8.

Lam. 3, 44.

Job 38, 10. 11. Allegor. every kind of sin, yet they are by no means permitted to fulfil all they wish. It follows,

Ver. 10. *I surrounded it with My boundaries.*

The Lord surrounds the sea with His boundaries, because He so restricts the wrath of persecutors by the dispensation of His judgments, that the swelling wave of their mad wrath is broken on the level shore of His secret dispensation. It follows;

Ver. 10, 11. *And I set a bar and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further, and here shalt thou break thy swelling waves.*

xviii. 38. What is designated by 'doors,' but holy preachers, and what by the 'bar,' except the Lord Incarnate? For He has in truth opposed these doors as a firmer barrier against the force of the swelling sea, the more He has strengthened them by barring them Himself. For because these doors of Holy Church are strengthened by this bar being placed against them, they could be battered indeed by the waves, but they could not be broken through: so that though the wave of persecution might dash on them from without, yet it could not penetrate to the centre of their heart. And because holy Preachers open themselves by their preaching to their followers, but close themselves by their authority against those who oppose them, they are, not improperly, called 'doors,' that is, open to the conversation[1] of the humble, and closed to the terrors of the proud. They are, not improperly, called 'doors:' because they both open an entrance for the faithful, and again oppose themselves to the entrance of the unbelieving. Let us consider what a door of the Church was Peter, who admitted Cornelius, when enquiring into the faith, and rejected Simon when seeking miraculous powers for a price; saying to the one, *I have found in truth that God is no respecter of persons*, he graciously opened the secrets of the kingdom. Declaring to the other, *Thy money perish with thee*, he closes the entrance of the heavenly court by a sentence of strict condemnation. What are all the Apostles but doors of Holy Church, when they hear by the voice of their Redeemer, *Receive the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose-*

[1] al. conversion

Acts 10, 34.

Acts 8, 20.

John20, 22. 23.

soever sins ye retain, they are retained? As if it were plainly said to them; By you, those to whom ye open yourselves shall come in to Me; and those to whom ye close yourselves, shall be rejected. Whilst then the sea rages, the Lord opposes His bar and doors; because whilst the storm of persecution spreads itself out in the world from bitter and faithless hearts, God exalts the glory of His Only Begotten, and the reverence of His preachers; and while He makes known the mysteries of the Divine strength, He breaks in the ungodly the waves of wrath. BOOK XXVIII.

39. But it is well said, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further.* Because there is doubtless a limit of the secret judgment, both when the storm of persecution should burst forth, and when it should cease, lest, if not aroused, it should not discipline the Elect, or, if unrestrained, should overwhelm them. But when the knowledge of the faith reaches as far as to the persecutors, the swelling of the troubled sea is appeased, and there does the sea break its waves, because on coming to the knowledge of the truth, it blushes at every thing it has done wickedly. For the broken wave in truth glides back on itself; because wickedness when overcome is accused even by the thought of its own heart; and suffers, as it were, the very violence which it had inflicted, because it feels the stings of guilt, from the depravity which it had committed. Whence it is said to certain persons by Paul, *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* As if it were said; Why did the waves of your wickedness raise themselves aloft, which being now broken in themselves, overwhelm you when converted, by the same means with which they puffed you up when perverted. It is therefore rightly said, *And here shalt thou break thy swelling waves.* But that the doors are spoken of a second time, in this shutting up of the sea, after the manner of Holy Scripture, a thing once mentioned is repeated by way of confirmation. Rom. 6, 21.

40. But if we ought to understand by the 'sea' in this place, not specially the crowd of persecutors, but the world in general; the Lord set up gates against the sea a second time, because He first gave to the human race the precepts of the law, and afterwards the testament of new grace; He a

Job 38, 11. Allegory. second time confined the violence of this sea by the gates He set against it, since those, whom He chose to obey His will, He first kept from idols, by giving the law, and afterwards delivered from the carnal understanding of things by the revelation of grace. The sea a second time received gates, because God first prohibited mankind from works of iniquity, but afterwards restrained them from the sin of thought.

Let us see how God first imposed gates on the swelling sea. For behold it is said by the law, *Thou shalt not kill.* *Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal.* *Thou shalt not bear false witness.* Let us see how the Lord confines this sea with second gates. Behold He says in the Gospel, *Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* And it is said again, *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you.* He therefore Who first prohibits wickednesses of deeds, and afterwards does away with the faults of the heart, doubtless twice imposes gates on the swelling sea, that it pass not over the shores of justice which have been drawn around it.

Ex. 20, 13—16. Deut. 5, 17—20. Matt. 5, 27. 28. ib. 43. 44.

41. But when He was saying, *Who hath shut up the sea with doors?* He immediately also subjoined the time, *When it was breaking forth, as if proceeding from the womb.* Because, namely, He then opposed mankind by the precepts of the Law, when the world, though little removed from its first beginning, was going forth even from its very birth to make progress in the carnal life. For to proceed from the womb, is to appear in the flesh in the light of present glory. And it is rightly subjoined, *When I was laying the cloud as the garment thereof.* Because, doubtless, God did not then present Himself to men in open sight, but while He rescued them from the error of unbelief, and yet laid not open to them the brightness of His own light, He withdrew them, as it were, from darkness, and yet covered them with a cloud, in order that they might forsake their former deeds of wickedness, and yet see not more clearly at present future

blessings. Whence also it is fitly subjoined, *And covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes.* For when He taught not ignorant people by the open preaching of the Spirit, but bound them, in figurative language, with the literal precepts, He enveloped them, while yet weak in knowledge, with the darkness of His words, as if with swaddling clothes; in order that they might gain strength by being bound by grosser commands, lest they should perish, through a fatal freedom, in their own pleasures. And since not love, but fear, was confining them to the way of righteousness, the Divine dispensation kept them close, as it were, in order to nourish them. For when the feeble people unwillingly endured the swaddling bands of precepts, it attained to a stronger condition from its very bondage. For because fear first restrained it from sin, it came forth afterwards, in a fitting condition, into the liberty of the Spirit. These swaddling clothes which He gave to beginners, the Lord Himself blames by the Prophet, saying, *I gave them precepts that were not good.* Ez. 20, 25. For evil things cease, as it were, to be evil, by comparison with worse, and good things are, so to say, not good, in comparison with better. For as it is said of Sodom and Gomorrah, to guiltier Judah, *Thou hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done,* Ez. 16, 51. so are the good precepts, which were given to the ignorant, spoken of as not good, by reason of the better precepts of the New Testament which succeed them. For neither would minds which were clinging to the practice of the carnal life be raised from their low condition, unless they advanced through a gradual course of preaching. For hence is it, that when they were settled in Egypt, their secret love of gain is condescended to by a considerate and righteous forbearance, and they are ordered to depart, after having first taken away the gold and silver vessels of their neighbours. But when brought to Mount Sinai, they hear at once, on receiving the Law, *Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbour's.* Ex. 20, 17. And hence it is, that in the same law they are directed to exact an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, and yet at last, on the revelation of grace, they are commanded, when struck, to offer the other cheek. Exod. 21, 24. Matt. 5, 38. 39. For because anger exacts more in vengeance than it has suffered in wrong; while they learn not to requite their wrongs in

Job 38, 11. Allegory.

a manifold manner, they would learn at last to bear them of their own accord, even when multiplied. Hence it is that He prohibited this same ignorant people certain observances, but preserved others after their original use, though He applied them so as to prefigure a better condition. For they used to sacrifice brute animals to idols in Egypt, and He afterwards retained the sacrifice of animals, for their observance, but forbade the worship of idols; in order that, while losing a portion of their customs, their weakness might be comforted by retaining something of them. But by a marvellous dispensation of wisdom the Lord converted into a mightier figure of the Spirit, that carnal custom which He retained. For what do the sacrifices of those animals designate, except the death of the Only-Begotten? What do the sacrifices of those animals signify, except the extinction of our carnal life? The weakness then of an ignorant people is condescended to, by the same means as the greater strength of the Spirit is announced through the shadowy forms of allegories. It is therefore rightly said, *And I was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes;* because He bore with the weaknesses of its tenderness, by the same means as He raised a lofty cloud of spiritual significations.

42. But because He kept them by the limits of the precepts from unrestrained wanderings of mind, He rightly subjoins; *I surrounded it with My boundaries.* And because He restrained the motions of this human race by sending the Mediator, He fitly subjoins; *And I set a bar and doors.* For He set in truth a bar and doors; because He confirms the preaching of the new life, by sending our Redeemer to oppose the sins of the guilty. For doors, when closed, are strengthened by a bar being placed against them. God, therefore, placed against them a bar, because against the wanton motives of the human race He sent the Only-Begotten, Who confirmed in His actions the spiritual precepts, which He taught in words. But it is well subjoined; *Hitherto shalt thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further, and here shalt thou break thy swelling waves.* For this sea had in truth passed over its former doors, because the wave of human pride used to overleap the barriers of the door opposed to it. But after the world found the Only-Begotten opposed to it, it broke the force of its pride, and could not

pass over, because it found the boundary of its fury closed up by His strength. Whence it is rightly said by the Prophet, *The sea saw and fled.* By doors, also, His sufferings which were seen can, not unfitly, be understood. And He secretly placed a bar against them, because He strengthened them by the invisible Godhead. Against which the waves of the world come, but they break and are scattered: because haughty men despise them when they see them, but by experience dread their strength. For when the human race first derided, and then trembled at, the sufferings of the Only-Begotten, it came swelling with pride, like the sea which is about to dash against the opposing doors, and was broken and scattered by their power. Book XXVIII. Ps. 114, 3.

But because this is said to blessed Job, in order that the glorying of his heart, at his many virtues, might be kept down, (lest he should perchance attribute to himself what he knows of his lofty position,) if we consider these words in a moral sense also, we learn how much they were said for his edification. Let Him say therefore,

Ver. 8. *Who shut up the sea with doors?*

43. What is this sea, except our heart, agitated by fury, embittered by strife, swelling with the haughtiness of pride, darkened by the deceit of wickedness? And how mightily this sea rages, any one observes, who understands in himself the secret temptations of thoughts. For behold we are now abandoning our perversities, we are adhering to proper desires, we are now cutting off, outwardly, our wicked works. But yet we are secretly harassed within, by that tempest of our former life, with which we have come thus far; and unless the barriers of unbounded fear were confining it, with the thought of the judgment, and dread of eternal torment, all the foundations of the work which has been raised up in us would have utterly fallen. For if that which rages within in suggestion, were to burst forth in deliberate act, the whole fabric of our life would have lain utterly overthrown. For being conceived in iniquity and born in sin, we bring with us into this world a contest, through the plague of innate corruptions, which we must strive hard to overcome. Whence it is rightly said also of the sea; *When it was breaking forth, as if proceeding from the womb.* xix. Mor.

Job 38, 9. Mor. Gen. 8, 21. For youth is the womb of evil thought. Of which the Lord says by Moses, *For the sense and thought of the human heart is prone to evil from its youth.* For the evil of corruption which each one of us has acquired from the springing up of his carnal desires, he exercises as he advances in years; and unless the hand of Divine fear speedily repress it, sin quickly swallows up all the goodness of created nature. Let no one then attribute the victory over his thought to himself, since the Truth says, *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it was breaking forth, as if it was proceeding from the womb?* For did not Divine grace restrain the waves of our heart, from the very first beginning of our thoughts, the sea, raging with the storms of temptations, would doubtless have overwhelmed the land of the human heart, so that, washed by the briny waves, it would have become barren; that is, it would have been charmed by the fatal pleasures of the flesh, and have perished. The Lord then alone shuts up the sea with doors, Who opposes to the evil motions of our hearts the barriers of inspired fear. But because we are prohibited following those things which we behold, because we are debarred from the enjoyment of bodily pursuits, we delight to raise the eyes of our mind even to things invisible, and to behold those very things we are ordered to follow. But what do we? These things are not yet open to our feeble sight. Behold we are invited to their love, and yet are restrained from their sight, because even if we ever see them by stealth and partially, we are in darkness from our still too imperfect sight. Whence it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 9. *When I was laying the cloud as the garment thereof, and was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes.*

xx. 44. This tumultuous sea, (our heart, namely, agitated by thoughts,) is covered with a cloud; because it is so obscured by the confusion of its own restlessness, as not clearly to behold inward peace. This sea is covered with darkness as with swaddling clothes, because it is still kept from the contemplation of sublime truths, by its weak and tender senses. Let us behold Paul covered as it were with a kind of darkness, as with swaddling clothes, when he says, *We now see* 1 Cor. 13, 12.

through a glass darkly: but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. For did he not perceive that he was a child in the understanding of heavenly things, he would not have first mentioned, on this point, a comparison of his age, saying, *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.* We therefore then attain to the strength of youth, when we behold with strong sight that life to which we are tending. But now, since the keenness of our sight is dazzled, through its infirmity, by the light within, our mind is, as it were, held bound by swaddling clothes. Where it is fitly subjoined; 1 Cor. 13, 11.

Ver. 10. *I surrounded it with my boundaries.*

45. For the Lord surrounds this sea with His boundaries, xxi.
because He keeps low within the limits of contemplation our heart which is still agitated by the plague and trouble of its corruption; that (though it desires more) it may not ascend higher than the limit assigned to it. Or certainly the Lord surrounds this sea with His boundaries; because He calms by the secret distributions of His gifts our heart swelling with temptations: at one time keeping a wicked suggestion from arriving at pleasure, and at another a wicked pleasure from breaking out into consent. He then, Who watches the unlawful motions of the heart, and in some cases keeps them from coming as far as to consent, but in others restrains them even from delight, doubtless imposes boundaries on the raging sea, that it burst not forth in act, but that the gently murmuring wave of temptation may dash itself within the secret recesses of the mind. But because it is then mightily restrained, when it is opposed by delight in God and by inspired virtues, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 10, 11. *And I set a bar and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further, and here shalt thou break thy swelling waves.*

46. For what do we understand by 'doors,' in a moral xxii.
sense, but virtues, and what by a 'bar,' but the strength of charity? These doors, therefore, that is, these virtuous deeds, the raging sea rends asunder, unless charity of mind, secretly placed against them, holds them together. But all the goodness of virtues is easily destroyed by a temptation

Job 38, 10. 11. Mor. of the heart rushing upon them, unless it be kept firm by charity rooted within. Whence also when Paul was, in his preaching, opposing certain doors of virtues to the sea of temptation, he immediately added to them, as it were, the strength of a bar, saying, *But above all these things having charity, which is the bond of perfectness.* For charity is called the bond of perfectness, because every good deed which is done, is doubtless fastened thereby, so as not to perish. For any work is speedily plucked up by the tempter, if it is found free from the bond of charity. But if a mind is constrained by the love of God and of its neighbour, when the motions of temptations have suggested to it any wicked thoughts, this very love opposes itself to their progress, and breaks the waves of sinful persuasion by the gates of virtues, and the bar of inmost love. Because therefore the Lord restrains the sins which spring up in the heart, by the strength of inspired charity, He checks the onset of the rising sea, by barriers barred against it. Anger, it may be, exasperates within, but, that heavenly peace may not be lost, the aid of the tongue is not lent to the agitation of the mind, so that that which sounds tumultuously in the recesses of the heart does not vent itself in words. Lust is kindled in the secret thoughts, but, that it lose not its heavenly purity, thy mind chastens those limbs, which could help to further the uncleanness conceived within; lest the filthiness of the heart should exhale to the corruption of the body. Avarice excites; but, that it lose not the kingdom of heaven, the mind, contented with its own lot, confines itself within the bounds of parsimony, lest it should break out in wicked deeds, and lest the heat of inward desire should ooze forth into outward acts. Pride puffs up a man; but, that he lose not his true dignity, by considering that he is dust, he brings himself down from the loftiness of his conceived pride; striving, doubtless, that that which he endures in the suggestion of thought, may not burst forth into outward exercise. It is well said, therefore, *I set a bar and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further, and here shalt thou break thy swelling waves,* because while each of the Elect is both assaulted by sin, and yet refuses to act upon evil suggestions, the sea is kept, as it were, within

Col. 3, 14.

bounds. And though it lashes the mind within, with the tumultuous waves of thoughts, yet it passes not over the appointed bounds of holy living. This sea indeed swells itself up, but when it is dashed against the firm deliberation of the heart, it is broken and retires. That blessed Job, then, may not ascribe it to himself that he stands firmly against the storms of his heart, let him hear by the voice of God; *Who shut up the sea with doors, when it was breaking forth as if proceeding from the womb?* and the rest: as if it were plainly said to him; In vain thou regardest thyself in thy good deeds without, if thou dost not consider Me within, Who calm in thee the waves of temptation. For that thou art able to withstand the waves in act, is of My might, Who break the waves of temptation in the heart.

BOOK XXIX.

Twenty-two verses of the thirty-eighth chapter, from the twelfth to the thirty-third inclusive, are explained; and many truths are taught, especially concerning the arts and snares of Satan, grace, predestination, reprobation, and the secret judgments of God.

i. 1. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in that He is the Power and Wisdom of God, is born of the Father before all times, or rather, because He neither began, nor ceased to be born, let us say more truly that He was ever born[1]. Yet we cannot say, He is ever being born[2], lest He should seem imperfect. But in order that He may be designated both eternal and perfect, let us say that He was even ever born, so that 'born' may relate to His perfection, and 'ever' to His eternity. In order that, in some way or another, that Essence which is without time may be able to be described in words of time. Although in calling Him perfect, we deviate much from the expression of His truth, since that which has not been made[3], cannot be called perfect[4]. And yet the Lord says, condescending to our words of infirmity, *Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect.* In that Divine Sonship therefore He could not be discerned by the human race, wherefore He came in human nature, to be seen; He wished to be seen, in order to be imitated. Which birth of the flesh appeared contemptible to the wise ones of the world; for they despised the weaknesses of His humanity, judging them unworthy of God. And man was the more His debtor, the more God took on Himself indignities for his sake. *For since the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* As if He were saying, When the world by its wisdom found not God, Who is Wisdom itself, it seemed good that it should

[1] natus.
[2] nascitur
[3] factum
[4] perfectum. Matt. 5, 48.
1 Cor. 1, 21.

behold God made Man through the foolishness of humanity, in order that His Wisdom might come down to our folly, and that our darkness, when enlightened by means of the clay of its own flesh, might behold the light of heavenly Wisdom. Born therefore of the Father, before all time, He deigned to be born of His Mother in time, in order that by confining His birth between a beginning and an end, He might disclose to eyes of the human mind that birth, which neither rises from a beginning, nor is bounded by an end. Whence it is now well said to blessed Job, Book XXIX. John 9, 6. 7.

Ver. 12. *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy birth, and hast thou shewn to the day-spring its place?*

2. Thou understandest, as I. For the origin of His Divinity has no before and after. And while Its ever being is through all eternity, while It circumscribes every thing which passes away, It bounds within Itself the ebbings and flowings of times. But because the origin of His Humanity began and ended, It received from time a before and after. But because, when He took on Himself the shadows of our temporal being, He shed on us the light of His eternity, after this beginning which the Creator made for Himself in time, the day-spring rightly learned its own place without time. For because the dawn, or day-spring, is turned from darkness into light, the whole Church of the Elect is, not improperly, designated by the name of dawn, or day-spring. For whilst it is brought from the night of unbelief to the light of faith, it is laid open to the splendour of heavenly brightness, as the dawn bursts into day after the darkness. Whence it is also well said in the Song of Songs, *Who is she that cometh forth as the rising dawn?* For Holy Church, seeking for the rewards of the heavenly life, is called the dawn, because, while it leaves the darkness of sin, it shines with the light of righteousness. ii. Sol. Song 6, 10.

3. But we have a deeper point to examine, on considering the nature of the dawn, or day-spring. For the day-spring, or dawn, announces that night has already passed, but yet does not present to us the full brightness of day: but whilst they dispel the one, and take up the other, they keep the light intermingled with darkness. What then are all we who follow the truth in this life, but day-spring, or dawn?

Job 38, 12. Because we now both do some things which are of the light, and yet are hitherto not free from some remains of the darkness. For it is said to God by the Prophet, *In Thy sight shall no man living be justified.* And it is written again, *In many things we offend all.* Paul also says, *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin which is in my members.* Where then the law of sin is contending with the law of the mind, there is surely still day-break; because the light, which has already shone forth, has not yet entirely overpowered the passing darkness. It is yet day-break; because while the law of the flesh assails the law of the mind, and the law of the mind that of the flesh, light and darkness are contending one against the other. Whence, when Paul was saying again, *The night is far spent;* he did not subjoin, 'The day has come,' but, *The day is at hand.* For he who says, after the departure of night, not that the day 'has arrived,' but that it is 'at hand,' doubtless proves that he is still in twilight before the sun, and after the darkness.

Ps. 143, 2. James 3, 2. Rom. 7, 23. Rom. 13, 12.

4. But the Church of the Elect will then be fully day, when the shade of sin will be no longer blended with it. It will then be fully day, when it has been brightened with the perfect warmth of the inward light. It will be then fully day, when tolerating no longer the seducing remembrance of its sins, it will conceal from itself even all the remains of darkness. Whence also this dawn is well pointed out as still only in progress, when it is said, *And hast thou shewn to the day-spring its place?* For that, whose place is pointed out, is certainly being called from one condition to another. For what is the place of dawn but the perfect brightness of the eternal vision? And when it has been conducted and has arrived thither, it has no longer any of the darkness of the past night. But now, when it is still enduring the annoyances of temptations, because the Church is in intention of heart hastening to another condition, the dawn is proceeding to its place. But if it did not behold this spot with its mind, it would still remain in the night of this life. But when it is daily striving to be perfected, and daily to be increased in light, it already beholds its place, and seeks for the sun to shine fully upon it. The dawn considers its

place, when a holy soul is burning to contemplate the sight of its Creator. The dawn was busily engaged in reaching its place, when David was saying, *My soul thirsteth for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?* The Truth was pointing out its place to the dawn, when It was saying by Solomon, *For what hath the wise more than the fool? and what the poor, except to go thither where there is life?* And this place our Lord after His birth doubtless manifested even to the Patriarchs who preceded His Incarnation; because unless they knew, by the spirit of Prophecy, that the King of their heavenly country was to become Incarnate, they would not see how desirable are the goods of this same country. The Truth made known its place to the dawn, when in the presence of His disciples He asked His Father, saying, *Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.* He pointed out its place to the dawn, when saying, *Wheresoever the carcase is, there will also the eagles be gathered together.* The dawn was hastening to arrive at this place, which it had known, when Paul was saying that *he had a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* And again, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* And again, *We know that if our earthly house of this habitation were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* But He well says that He shewed its place to the dawn after His birth, because before He Himself made known the blessedness of future retribution by His own Body, He confined it in the knowledge of a few. But when He took the infirmities of a human birth, He extended the knowledge of coming glory in the love of a countless multitude. But because compassion so carries on the mystery of the Divine work, that anger still attends it, in order that the secret Judge may look favourably on and ransom some, and pass over and ruin others, since we have learnt how He enlightens the Elect by His Incarnation, let us now hear how He condemns the reprobate. It follows;

Book XXIX.

Ps. 42, 2.

Eccles. 6, 8.

John 17, 24.

Mat. 24, 28.

Phil. 1, 23.

ib. 21.

2 Cor. 5, 1.

Ver. 13. *Hast Thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, and hast Thou shaken the wicked out of it?*

5. The Lord 'held the ends of the earth,' because He came in the end of the world to the synagogue which was iii.

Job 38, 13—15. Alleg. now forsaken and subject to foreign kings: and He shook the wicked out of it, because He cast out even from the glory of the carnal sacrifice, those who denied the spiritual preaching of the faith. Or He certainly held the ends of the earth, because He chose out of Judæa a few abject and humble men. He held the ends of the earth, because He forsook the doctors of the law, and chose fishermen. And while He holds the ends of the earth, He shakes the wicked out of it, because while He strengthens weak believers, He condemns the sturdy unbelievers therein. But the word 'shaking,' He also rightly added: because by His coming He stirred up even the hearts of the reprobates with immeasurable fear. For they in truth were shaken who were saying, *We prevail nothing, behold, the whole world is gone after Him.* But a thing which is shaken is wearied out by being drawn hither and thither. Judæa therefore had been shaken, which was saying of Christ by some, *That He is a good Man*, and was resisting Him by others, saying, *Nay; but He deceiveth the people.* It was saying by some, *If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing.* And at last it exclaims by others, *If this Man were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee.* The reprobate were shaken indeed but not prostrated, when at one time they beheld the miracles with wonder, and at another despised and derided the disgraces of His weakness. Had not they been shaken, who were saying, *How long dost Thou hold our soul in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.* Or He certainly shook and held the ends of the earth, because when He terrified the feeble hearts of the humble with pious fear, He did not abandon them to strict judgment. For the multitude of the believers in God stood more firmly, from the same reason that it was alarmed when humbled in itself. For that God holds firm the person whom He shakes, He teaches by the Prophet, saying, *On whom shall My Spirit rest, but on the humble and quiet, and Him who trembleth at My words?* That He holds the person whom He shakes, is intimated by the testimony of Solomon, who says, *Happy is the man who feareth always, but he that is of a hard heart shall fall into mischief.* Because therefore the Lord held the ends of Judæa in the Apostles, and

John 12, 19.

John 7, 12.

John 9, 33.

John 18, 30.

John 10, 24.

Is. 66, 2. sec LXX.

Prov. 28, 14.

rejected therefrom the Scribes, and Pharisees, and High Priests, as the merit of their iniquity demanded, let us hear what is still added respecting their condemnation. It follows; Book XXIX.

Ver. 14. *The seal shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment.*

6. What else but 'clay' did the Lord find the people of Israel, whom He came unto when given up to the practices of the Gentiles, and toiling at bricks in Egypt? And whilst He led it forth by so many miracles to the land of promise, and filled it, when brought thither, with the knowledge of His wisdom, whilst He conferred on it so many secret mysteries by means of Prophecy, what else did He make it but a 'seal' for preserving His mystery? For Divine Prophecy itself kept secret, whatever the Truth revealed of Itself at the end. But when, after so many Divine secrets, after the many miracles which it witnessed at the coming of our Redeemer, it loved its land, in preference to the truth, (saying by the Priests, *If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation;*) it returned, as it were, to those bricks, which it had left in Egypt: and that which had been made the seal of God, turned back again to that which it had abandoned. And, having been a 'seal,' it appeared as 'clay' in the eyes of the Truth, when it lost, through the wickedness of impiety, the mysteries of the word, which it had received, and chose to savour only of the things of earth, which pollute. iv. John 11, 48.

7. Where it is fitly subjoined, *And shall stand as a garment.* For because garments which are unfinished and of thicker texture, even when put on, do not adhere, nor are well fitted to the limbs of the wearer, they are said to stand. Judæa therefore, even when it seemed to be labouring in the knowledge of the truth, stood as a garment; because it professed to serve God in external commands, but refused to cling to Him by the understanding of love. While it observed the letter only, in the precepts of God, and did not through the Spirit unite itself to their inmost meanings, it did not cling, so to speak, to Him Who had put it on. Where it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 15. *From the wicked their light shall be taken away.*

Job 38, 15. 8. Because, while they refuse to believe the truth, they lose for ever the knowledge of the Law, and while they boast of having received the Law, they are, doubtless, blinded by boasting of their knowledge. For it is written, *Let their eyes be darkened that they see not.* And again it is written, *Blind the hearts of this people, and make their ears heavy.* And again it is written, *For judgment I have come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.* And because they boasted themselves in the works of the Law against the Giver of the Law, it is fitly subjoined;

v. Alleg. Ps. 69, 23. Is. 6, 10. John 9, 39.

And the high arm shall be broken.

vi. 9. For the high arm is broken, when the proud works of the Law are reproved, by preaching the grace of faith, when it is said, *By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified.*

Rom. 3, 20.

10. But all these words can be understood in another sense also. For Holy Scripture is wont to call the Church 'earth.' The Lord therefore holds and shakes the ends of the earth, because He allows the ends of His Church to be agitated by most cruel persecution through the coming of Antichrist, and yet forsakes her not, by permitting it. Sometimes the Lord holds this earth, and shakes it not; sometimes He holds and shakes it; because He possesses it at one time with the tranquil peace of faith, at another orders it to be disturbed with the assault of persecution.

11. But when saying, *Hast thou held and shaken the ends of the earth*, He rightly added immediately, *And hast thou shaken the wicked out of it?* For as Paul bears witness, there are many therein, *who profess that they know God, but in works deny Him.* The Lord therefore shakes the wicked out of it, because those, whom deep-seated sins possess, will then fall into the gulph of open unbelief, and pass over to the heap of chaff, when moved by the breath of that temptation. And though they now conceal themselves within the bosom of the threshing floor, under the semblance of faith, they will then, doubtless, bound forth from the heap of grain, by the fan of strict judgment.

Tit. 1, 16.

12. Whence it is also fitly subjoined, *The seal shall be restored, as clay.* As if he were openly saying; They who

now appear in the bosom of the Church as a 'seal,' will then in the sight of all men be restored as 'clay:' that is, they deceive not the judgments of men concerning their profession of religion, but it is proved that they savour of earthly things. For Holy Scripture is wont to use the word 'seal' for faith, and 'clay' for iniquity. For the younger son, who returned to his father, having consumed his substance, received a ring as a present. For the Gentile people, which returns to God, by penitence, having lost its immortality, is defended by the seal of faith. Whence also it is said to the Church by its Bridegroom, *Set Me as a seal upon thine heart.* For a seal is placed on things for the very purpose that they may not be violated by any boldness of plunderers. The Bridegroom therefore is placed as a seal on the heart, when the mystery of His faith is imprinted for the safe keeping of our thought; in order that that unfaithful servant, namely our adversary, observing our hearts sealed by faith, may not presume to break in upon them with temptation. But by 'clay' worldly infection is set forth, as the Psalmist bears witness, who says, *He brought me up out of the pit of misery, and the deepest clay.* Because many then who are found in worldly infection, are sealed, when brought to the Church, with the sacrament of heavenly faith, and yet depart not from their wicked deeds, and conceal themselves now under the cloke of faith, and yet shew what they really are, when they have found an opportunity, it is rightly said, *The seal shall be restored as clay.* For those whom we now believe to be faithful, we shall then find to be the very enemies of the faith; and though, when not tempted, they appear to be a 'seal,' they will doubtless, when tempted, be 'clay.' Whence also it is rightly said, *Shall be restored:* for their reprobate life proves them afterwards to be such, as their conscience could have done before their faith. Of whom it is fitly subjoined, *And shall stand as a garment.*

Book XXIX.

Luke 15, 22.

Sol. Song 8, 6.

Ps. 40, 2.

13. For Holy Church is now clothed as it were with garments, as many in number as the faithful, by whose veneration she is honoured. Whence also when the Gentiles were shewn to her, it is said by the Lord through the Prophet; *As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely be clothed with all these, as with an ornament.* But she is now arrayed, in ap-

Is. 49, 18.

Job 38, 15. Allegory. pearance only, with many who seem to be faithful, but when the assault of persecution strikes them, she will be stripped of them and laid bare; of whose fate it is said, *And it shall stand as a garment.* But to 'stand' is put in this place for persisting in sin. Whence it is written, *And stood not in the way of sinners.* Or certainly every reprobate is said to 'stand as a garment,' to shew that he cannot stand at all. Because, as a garment, when put on, is stretched by the body, in displaying its appearance, but when taken off is bent and folded together; so every one, who has fallen back from the stability of Holy Church, was stretched out, as it were, and beautiful, while being worn, but will lie afterwards, when stripped off, broken down and cast aside. But if by 'standing' we understand 'continuance,' every reprobate person who endures a short time in this life, which he loves, stands as a garment. Whence also it is said by the Prophet, *All shall wax old as a garment, and as a covering shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.* These points therefore, which he introduced veiled in a cloud of allegory, he now makes known in plainer words, adding, *From the wicked their light shall be taken away.*

Ps. 1, 1.

Ps. 102, 26.

vii. 14. For neither does the light of God now illumine those, who veil the malice of their iniquity with the name of faith. For while they neglect to live according to the preaching of faith, and yet in appearance reverence it, they seek for the honour of this present life under the name of religion; and they gain this light from faith, as faith cherishes them in the sight of men. But there are some who sincerely believe the eternal truths which they hear, and yet contradict by evil living the very faith which they profess. These also have their light in darkness, for while they act perversely and yet think rightly about God, they are illumined in a measure by the shining of a light, so as not to be quite in darkness. And while they love the things of earth more than those of heaven, those that they see more than those they hear of, when the season of persecution assaults them, they lose that sound belief they seemed to possess. And this is specially the case, in a greater degree, at that time, when the head of the wicked himself arising, in the last persecution, against Holy Church, his boldness attacks it with unrestrained

strength. Then is the heart of each one laid open, when whatever lay concealed is exposed, and they who are now holy in words, but unholy in heart, fall headlong, on their wickedness being made public, and lose the light of faith which they had in appearance possessed. But it is necessary, amidst all this, for each of us to return to the hidden recess of his heart, and to fear at the fatal results of his doings, lest he fall, as his merits demand, into the number of such men, by the strict justice of the judgments of God. BOOK XXIX.

15. But let no one inconsiderately flatter himself, and believe that he therefore is exempt from such a fall, because he thinks that he does not reach to the storm of this tempest. O how many have beheld not the times of that temptation, and yet are involved in the storm of his temptation. Cain saw not the time of Antichrist, and yet was deservedly a limb of Antichrist. Judas knew not the fierceness of that persecution, and yet yielded to the might of his cruelty, by the persuasion of avarice. Simon was far removed from the times of Antichrist, and yet joined himself to his pride, by perversely seeking for the power of miracles. Thus a wicked body is united to its head, thus limbs to limbs, when they both know not each other in acquaintance, and yet are joined together by wicked doings. For neither had Pergamos known the books or the words of Balaam, and yet, following his wickedness, it heard in a voice of reproof from above; *Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat and to commit fornication.* Both times and places separated the Church of Thyatira from the knowledge of Jezebel; but because equal guilt of life had enthralled it, Jezebel is said to dwell therein, and to persist in perverse doings, as the Angel bears witness, who says; *I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.* Behold, because they could be found, who followed the conduct of Jezebel in their reprobate deeds, Jezebel is said to have been found there: because an agreement of habits makes a corrupt body one, even if times or places sever it asunder. Whence it is that every wicked person, who has already gone

Acts 8, 19. 20.

Rev. 2, 14.

Ib. 20.

Job 38, 15. ALLEG. by, survives in his perverse imitators, and that the author of iniquity, who has not yet come, is already visible in those who do his works. Hence John says; *Now are there become many Antichrists,* because all wicked persons are even now his members, which being in truth born in wickedness, have prevented their head, by evil living. Hence Paul says, *That he might be revealed in his time; for the mystery of iniquity doth already work.* As if he were saying; Then Antichrist will be manifestly seen; for he now secretly works his hidden works in the hearts of the unrighteous. For, to say nothing of more open crimes, behold one man secretly envies his brother in his heart, and if he find an opportunity, strives to supplant him. Of what other is he a member, but of him, of whom it is written, *Through envy of the devil came death into the world?* Another, thinking himself a person of great desert, preferring himself to all, through swelling of heart, believes all to be inferior to him. Of what other is he a member, but of him of whom it is written, *He beholdeth every high thing, and is a king over all the children of pride?* Another seeks for the power of this world, not that he may profit others, but that he may not be subject to another. Of what other is he a member, than of him, of whom it is written, *Who said, I will sit in the mount of the testament, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High?* For the Most High alone so rules over all things, as to be unable to be subject to another. Whom the devil perversely wished to imitate, when seeking dominion of his own, he refused to be subject to Him. Whoever therefore seeks for power of his own, imitates the devil, because he loathes to submit to him who is placed over him by Divine ordinance.

1 John 2, 18. 2 Thess. 2, 6. 7. Wisd. 2, 24. Job 41, 34. Is. 14, 13. 14.

16. There are many things besides, to proclaim certain persons to be faithless, though established in the peace of the Church. For I see that some persons so accept the person of the powerful, as not to hesitate, when requested by him, to deny, for his good will, the truth in the cause of a neighbour. And who is Truth, but He who said, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life?* For John the Baptist died not, when questioned about his confession of Christ, but about the truth of justice: but because Christ is the Truth,

John 14, 6.

he therefore went even to death for Christ, because namely for the truth. Let us suppose that a person has, when questioned, accepted the person of the powerful, and has denied the truth, that he might not suffer the wrong even of a word. What, I pray you, would he do in the pain of punishments, who was ashamed of Christ among the scourges of words? Behold, even after this he is still a Christian before the eyes of men, and yet if God resolved to judge him strictly, he is one no longer.

17. But I see others, to whom are assigned, through their position as teachers, the duties of exhorting and reproving, who behold some unlawfulness committed, and who yet, when afraid of losing the good will of certain powerful persons, presume not to reprove it. What else doth he, whoever he be, but see the wolf coming, and flee away? He flies, because he was silent; he was silent, because he despised eternal grace, and preferred temporal glory. Behold he hid himself within the concealments of his silence before the face of a powerful man, and gave way as to open persecution, so also to secret fear. It is well said of such; *They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* If these things are strictly judged, whoever is such, even though public persecution was wanting, yet denied Christ by his silence. There are not wanting then, even in the peace of the Church, the temptations of Antichrist. Let no one then dread those times of the last persecution, as though the only ones. For the cause of Antichrist is continually promoted among the ungodly, because he is even now secretly working his mystery in their hearts. And even if many, now seemingly established within the Church, pretend to be what they are not, they will yet at the coming of the Judge be exposed, as they are. Of whom Solomon well says, *I saw the wicked buried, who even when they lived here, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city, as men of just works.* After it was said then of the wicked; *The seed shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment, and their light shall be taken away from the wicked,* (which is certainly to take place in that persecution of Antichrist,) he presently, consoling us concerning the destruction of the same Antichrist, says:

John 12, 43.

Eccles. 8, 10.

Job 38, 15. *And the high arm shall be broken.*

viii. Alleg. 18. For, for what else is the high arm taken, but the proud loftiness of Antichrist, who is so exalted over the reprobate minds of men with the pride of worldly glory, that though a sinful man, and yet scorning to be counted a man, he pretends falsely that he is God above men? Whence the Apostle Paul says; 2 Thess. 2, 4. *So that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself, as if he were God.* And to shew his pride more fully, he stated before, *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.* For even a man can sometimes be called God, according to that which is said to Moses, Exod. 7, 1. *See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh.* But a mere man cannot be worshipped as God. But because Antichrist sets himself up over all holy men, and over the power of the Godhead Itself, he endeavours to surpass that which is called God, and that which is worshipped as God, by demanding for himself the name of glory. But we must observe into what a depth of pride he has fallen, who remained not in that degree of ruin, in which he fell. For both the devil and man fell, by pride, from the state of their own creation, either for him to say, Is. 14, 14. *I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High*, or for the other to hear and to believe, Gen. 3, 5. *Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods.* They fell, therefore, both of them, because they desired to be like God, not by righteousness, but by power. But man who had fallen, by perversely aiming at the likeness of God, discerning, when freed by grace, that he was very different from God, through the guilt of sin, exclaims, Ps. 89, 8. *O Lord, who is like unto Thee?* But the devil, having been justly cast aside in his sinful lapse, continued not in his own degree of ruin; but the longer he was deprived of the grace of the Almighty, the more did he add to the guilt of his sins. For he who fell, because he wished, inverting the order of things, to be like God, was brought so far, that entering into Antichrist, he scorned to seem like God, and, when condemned, counts Him as his inferior, Whom he could not in his pride regard as his equal. For when this, which we have stated before, is said of him; 2 Thess. 2, 4. *Exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;* it is openly shewn, that by seeking at first the

likeness of God, he wished, as it were, to exalt himself against God, but that increasing in the sin of pride, he now sets himself up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. Because then this his pride will be smitten by the coming of the strict Judge, (as it is written, *Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming,*) it is rightly said, *And the high arm shall be broken.* Book XXIX. 2 Thess. 2, 8.

19. But all these expressions, which have been twice discussed, can be still understood in another sense. For the words of God are conserves[1], as it were, to give us strength. And just as, the more a conserve is ground, the more does its virtue increase in the cup; so the more we bruise the Divine words by expounding them, the more, when we hear them, are we benefited, as if by the draught. Because therefore the merciful God long bears with the sins of men, and frequently converts the minds of sinners, when He sees the end now approaching, He rightly says of Himself, as suggesting the might of so great affection, Mor. [1] pigmenta

Ver. 13. *Hast thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, and hast thou shaken the wicked out of it?*

20. For by 'earth' is designated man, who savours of things below; to whom it was said in his sin; *Earth thou art, and to earth shalt thou go.* But because the merciful Creator forsakes not His own work, He both bears with the sins of men, by His wisdom, and at last remits them by their conversion. But, when He beholds hard and insensible minds, He scares them at one time with threats, at another with blows, at another with revelations: in order that those which had become hardened by most fatal security may be softened by wholesome fear, so that they may, though at last, return, and blush at least at this, that they have long been waited for. For thus the Lord, because He judges more severely the ends of our life, therefore purges also His Elect more carefully at the close. For it is written; *God shall judge the ends of the earth.* He therefore watches more anxiously over our closing deeds, the more He considers that the beginnings of our coming life depend upon them. And because He does this of His mercy; by bringing forward His tenderness, with which He receives even those sinners who have been converted at the last, He instructs ix. Gen. 3, 19. 1 Sam. 2, 10.

Job 38, 13. 14. Mor. the righteousness of blessed Job, saying; *Hast thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, and hast thou shaken the wicked out of it?* Thou understandest, As I, Who frequently arouse sinners by alarming them at their last moments, hold them fast by converting them, and pluck from their hearts the wicked motions of their thoughts. And the Lord rightly teaches blessed Job, how He converts sinners at the end. As if He openly said, Observe the power of My mercy, and bring down the pride of thy righteousness. But, that that punishment of former sin accompanies these closing hours of a man, through the death of the flesh, even when he is converted, He immediately teaches, saying;

Ver. 14. *The seal shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment.*

x. 21. For the Lord made man, whom He fashioned after His own likeness, as a kind of seal of His power. But yet it shall be restored as clay; because, though he may by conversion escape eternal sufferings, yet he is condemned by the death of the flesh, in punishment of the pride he has committed. For man, who has been formed from clay, and adorned with the likeness of the Divine image, having received the gift of reason, forgets, when swelling with pride of heart, that he was formed of the basest materials. Whence it hath been ordered by the marvellous justice of the Creator, that, because he became proud in consequence of that reasonable sense which he received, he should again by death become earth, which he was unwilling humbly to regard himself. And because he lost the likeness of God by sin, but returns by death to the substance of his own clay, it is rightly said; *The seal shall be restored as clay.* And because, when the spirit is summoned from the body, it is stripped, as it were, of its kind of covering of flesh, it is fitly subjoined of the same clay; *and shall stand as a garment.* For, for our clay to stand as a garment is for it to remain empty and stripped off, even till the time of the resurrection. But because even they do not escape this punishment of pride, who overcome this very pride by living humbly, He subjoins what is the special punishment of the proud, saying;

Ver. 15. *From the wicked their light shall be taken away, and the high arm shall be broken.*

22. For the death of the flesh, which restores the Elect to their light, takes away their light from the reprobate. For the light of the proud is the glory of this present life. And that light is then withdrawn from it, when it is called by the death of the flesh, to the darkness of its own retributions. For then is the high arm there broken, because loftiness of heart, which has been violently seized on, beyond the order of nature, is scattered by the weight of Divine justice which overwhelms it, in order that how[1] wickedly it had exalted itself for a while, it may learn when it is crushed for ever by the weight of judgment. But none of us would know what was to follow after death, did not the Creator of our life come even to the punishment of our death. For did He not of His own mercy seek the lowest condition, He could not justly bring back to the highest, us, who were lost after we had received His likeness. Whence it is rightly subjoined; Book XXIX. xi.

[1] Oxf. Mss. quam.

Ver. 16. *Hast thou entered into the depth of the sea, and hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss?*

23. As if He said, As I, Who not only sought the sea, that is this world, by assuming the flesh and soul of a man, but also descended by that flesh voluntarily subjected to death, to the bottom of the pit, as if to the depths of the sea. For if the 'sea' must be understood to mean the world after the manner of Scripture language, nothing hinders the 'depths of the sea' from meaning the bars of the pit. But the Lord sought this depth of the sea, when He entered the lowest parts of the pit, in order to rescue the souls of His Elect. Whence also it is said by the Prophet, *Thou hast made the depths of the sea a way, for the ransomed to pass over.* For this depth of the sea was, before the coming of the Redeemer, not a way, but a prison, because it confined within it even the souls of the good, though not in places of punishment. But the Lord made this depth a way, because He, by coming thither, granted His Elect to pass over from the bars of the pit to heavenly places. Whence it is there fitly said, *for the ransomed to pass over.* But that which He had called the depths of the sea, repeating in other words He calls the lowest parts of the abyss: because as the abyss of waters is not comprehended by our sight, so are the secrets xii. Is. 51, 10.

Job 38, 17. Myst. of the pit not penetrated by us with any sense of our understanding. For we behold who are withdrawn hence, but we see not what retribution of punishments awaits them according to their desert.

24. But we must carefully notice, that He says that He had walked in the lowest parts of the abyss. For to walk belongs not to one who is bound, but to one who is free. For fetters impede to a like extent the steps of him whom they bind. Because then the Lord endured no bonds of sin, He walked in the pit. For He came unfettered to those who were bound. Whence it is written, *I am become as a man without help, free among the dead.* For the Lord then to walk in the lowest parts of the abyss is for Him to find nothing to detain Him in the place of damnation, as Peter bears witness, who says, *Having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible for Him to be holden of it.* Or certainly, (because, when we are led in walking from place to place, we are found present here and there,) the Lord is said to have walked in the pit, in order to shew that He was present to Elect souls in their several places, by the power of His Godhead. Whence also the spirit of wisdom is described as full of motion, that by means of that which is no where absent, He might be described as meeting us every where. And this descent of His, our Lord regards as more marvellous the more frequently He makes mention of it to ransomed man. For repeating it again, He subjoins;

Ps. 88, 4. 5.

Acts 2, 24.

Wisd. 7, 24.

Ver. 17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, and hast thou seen the gloomy doors?*

xiii. 25. For the 'gates of death' are the adverse powers. Which the Lord descended and opened, because by dying He overcame their strength. Which are by another appellation called the 'gloomy doors,' because while they are not seen, by reason of their crafty concealment, they open to deceived minds the way of death. Which gloomy doors the Lord beholds; because He both observes and represses the crafty malice of unclean spirits. And did He not, by beholding, restrain them, while we know them not, our mind would both know nothing of their snares, and would be taken and perish by them. But even we behold these gloomy gates, when we are illumined with rays of heavenly light. Whence also it is

said by the Prophet, *The Lord is my helper, and I shall see mine enemies.* He therefore Himself beholds our enemies, Who by His gift makes our enemies visible to us. Or certainly, the Lord then beheld the gloomy gates, when penetrating the barriers of the pit, He smote the cruel spirits, and by His death condemned them that presided over death. Which is here spoken of no longer as of a future, but as of a past event; for this reason, because that which He intended to do in deed, He had already done in predestination. But because the Church increased after His death and resurrection, and was extended in all nations, it is fitly subjoined; Book XXIX. Ps. 118, 7.

Ver. 18. *Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?*

26. For whilst the Lord sought the narrowness of death, He spread abroad His faith in the nations, and extended Holy Church to numberless hearts of believers. To whom it is said by the Prophet, *Enlarge the place of thy tent, and extend the curtains of thy tabernacles; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt penetrate to the right hand and to the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles.* But this breadth of the earth would surely not exist, had He not first despised, in dying, the life which we know, and pointed out by His rising again, the life which we know not. For He opened by His death the eyes of our minds, and shewed us what was the life which was to follow. Whence also, observing this order in the Gospel, He says to His disciples, *Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name through all nations.* For few of the people of Israel believed at His preaching, but numberless peoples of the Gentiles followed the way of life, on His death. For He endured the proud, while He was still living in a suffering condition, but He overthrew them when dead to a life of suffering. Which Samson long before well typified in himself, for he slew but few during his life; but on the destruction of the temple he slew a host of enemies, at his death. Because the Lord doubtless killed but few from their pride and haughtiness[1] when alive, but more, when the Temple of His body was broken in pieces: and the Elect from the Gentiles, whom He endured in His life, He xiv. Is. 54, 2. 3. Luke 24, 46. 47. Judges 16, 30.

[1] as we say, 'dead unto sin.'

Job 30, 16. Myst. subdued all at once by His death. After then He had taught us that He had penetrated the regions below, He rightly subjoined immediately the breadth of the earth to be considered, *Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?* As if He were saying to man when scourged, Think on what I have endured, and consider what I have purchased; and complain not thyself of the rod, when thou art ignorant what rewards await thee, in retribution. In the midst then of these words of the Creator, I think it worth while for us to turn away our eyes for a while from the common and public good, and to observe what He secretly does with each of ourselves. For He says;

Ver. 16. *Hast thou entered the depth of the sea?*

xv. Mor. 27. For the 'sea' is the mind of man, and God enters its depths, when it is roused from its inmost thoughts to lamentations of penitence through its knowledge of itself, when He calls to its memory the wickednesses of its former life, and rouses the mind which is agitated by its own confusion. God penetrates the depth of the sea, when He changes hearts, which are even despaired of. For He goes into the sea, when He humbles a worldly heart; He enters the depth of the sea, when He disdains not to visit minds which are even overwhelmed with sins. Whence it is rightly added in a question; *And hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss?* For what abyss is there, but the human mind, which while unable to comprehend itself, is like an obscure abyss, hid from itself, in every thing that it is. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, *The abyss uttered its voice from the depth of its thought.* For whilst the human mind does not dive into itself, it praises more humbly, by comparison with itself, the power of the Divine nature, which it is unable to comprehend.

Hab. 3, 10.

28. For God then to walk in the lowest parts of the abyss, is for Him to convert the hearts even of the wickedest men, and, by touching minds which are despaired of, with traces of His visitation, wonderfully to refashion them. For when any one feels compunction after enormous sins, what else is beheld but God walking in the lowest parts of the abyss? For God walks, as it were, in the abyss, when He penetrates the gloomy heart, and tramples down the invisible waves of

sins. For we frequently lament some sins past, and are being assaulted by others present; so that we are harassed at one time by pride, at another by anger, at another by lust, and at another by avarice tempting us. But when the Lord suppresses all these in our heart by the fear of His secret visitation, what else doth He but place His steps in the abyss? Which steps we behold with the mind, when we consider how the gifts of His fear stand up to oppose these rebellious sins. For the Prophet had beheld these steps, when He was saying, *Thy goings were seen, O God, the goings of my God, my King, Who is in His holy place.* For He who beholds the inordinate motions of his mind restrained within him by the memory of the Divine judgments, beholds, as it were, the steps of God walking within him. Let it be said, therefore, to blessed Job; *Hast thou entered the depth of the sea, and hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss?* Thou understandest, as I, Who with wondrous pity trample down in the hearts of sinners, at one time anger, at another lust, at another avarice, at another rising pride. As if it were plainly said to him, If thou seest that I alone suppress the lurking vices of the heart, thou wilt cease to be puffed up with self-justification. And because when we are visited by God, we are led to confession concerning even the secret and unlawful motions of our mind, it is rightly subjoined;

Book XXIX.

Ps. 68, 24.

Ver. 17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?*

29. For the gates of death are wicked thoughts: which we open to God, when we confess them with weeping in penitence. For He beholds them even when not confessed; but enters into them, when confessed. For He then in truth opens a way for Himself in the gates of death, when we have put aside evil thoughts, and He comes to us after confession. And they are called the gates of death for this reason, because the way to death is always opened through evil thoughts. Which is again repeated, when it is subjoined;

xvi.

And hast thou seen the gloomy doors?

30. For the gloomy doors are the lurking evils of the mind, which can both exist within, and yet not be observed by another. Which yet the Lord beholds, when He destroys them by the secret look of grace. For it is written, *The*

Job 38, 18—20. Mor. Prov. 20, 8. *King Who sitteth in the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with His sight.* And because every vice contracts, and every virtue enlarges the mind, after the destruction of vices it is rightly subjoined, *Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?* For did not virtue enlarge the mind, 2 Cor. 6, 13. 14. Paul would not say to the Corinthians, *Be ye also enlarged, and be not yoked with unbelievers.* But we must observe carefully that which is said;

Ver. 18. *Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?*

xvii. 31. For the extent of the inwardly good is not at all comprehended, unless it is carefully considered. For poverty frequently humbles them outwardly, the torture of punishment straitens them; but yet, in the midst of these things, their inward resolution expands itself ever to hope for heavenly rewards. The Apostles had outwardly been straitened, when they were enduring scourges; but they were standing at liberty in great width within, who had turned, in themselves, Acts 5, 41. these very scourges into joy. For it is written, *The Apostles departed from the presence of the council; rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name of Jesus.* Paul had found this width, in his straits, who Phil. 1, 12. 13. said, *But I wish you to know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel, so that my bonds in Christ were made manifest in all the palace.* David was possessing this Ps. 4, 1. width, in the midst of narrowness, when saying, *Thou hast enlarged me in tribulation.* This earth, therefore, that is the conscience of holy men, is then enlarged when it is pressed outwardly with the adversities of this world. For when it is driven away from security in this life, it is beaten inwardly on itself, so as to stretch toward the hope of heavenly things. And when it is not allowed to wander abroad, being brought back, as it were, into its own bosom, it is enlarged. We however behold what misfortunes good men endure, but see not how much they rejoice within. We learn, on consideration, the breadth of their mind, sometimes in their words, sometimes in their deeds: but yet we know not how great is the range of that breadth in them. Let human wisdom hear then, *Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?* and let it learn its own folly. As if he said, As I, Who alone

fully consider the secret rejoicing of the holy, when surrounded with scourges, because I alone mercifully fashion them. Or certainly, blessed Job is asked whether he has considered the breadth of the earth, in order that he might be humbled by the example of another's enlargement. As if it were openly said to him, Consider those whom the countless evils of this world cannot confine, and cease to boast, amid thy blows, of the state of thy own heart. It follows; Book XXIX.

Ver. 18—20. *Tell Me, if thou knowest all things, in what path the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness? that thou mayest take each of them to the bounds thereof, and understand the paths to the house thereof.*

32. Blessed Job is tried with a weighty question, in that he is examined as to the way of light and the place of darkness, whether he should bring them each to their boundaries, and should understand the paths to the house thereof. For what is understood by the word 'light' but righteousness? and what is designated by 'darkness' but iniquity? Whence it is said to some who had been converted from the wickedness of sins, *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.* And it is stated of some who continue in sin, *They that sleep, sleep in the night.* It is said therefore to blessed Job, *Tell Me, if thou knowest all things, in what path the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness?* As if it were said to him, If thou imaginest that thou hast perfect wisdom, tell Me, either into whose heart that innocency, which is now wanting, is coming, or in whose heart that wickedness, which now exists, remains. *In what path the light dwelleth:* that is, whose mind righteousness comes and fills. *And what is the place of darkness,* that is, in whom does blind iniquity remain. *That thou mayest take each of them to the bounds thereof,* that is, that thou mayest decide whether he who is now seen to be wicked, finishes his life in iniquity, and whether he who is now seen to be righteous, terminates the conclusion of his life with the perfection of righteousness. *And understand the paths to the house thereof:* that is, that thou mayest consider and discern, either for whom perseverance in good deeds secures an eternal mansion in the Kingdom, or whom evil habits, xviii. Eph. 5, 8. 1 Thess. 5, 7.

Job 38, 18—20. binding to the end, condemn to eternal punishment. For 'house' is put for resting place, and 'path' for conduct. A path therefore leads to a house, because our doings lead on to our resting place. But what man could speak when questioned on these points? who could hear them at least without fear? For we daily see many who shine forth with the light of righteousness, and who are yet at their close obscured with the darkness of wickedness. And we behold many involved in the darkness of sins, and yet at the end of their life suddenly set free and restored to the light of righteousness. We also know that many have preserved entire, even to the end, the path of righteousness which they have once found, and we have beheld that most men have heaped up without ceasing, even to the end, their wickedness which they have once begun.

33. But who, amid these clouds of secret judgments, can so dart forth the light of his mind, as to distinguish with any discernment, either who continues in sin, or who perseveres in righteousness, or who is converted from the highest to the lowest condition, or who relapses from the highest to the lowest? These points are hid from men's senses, nor is aught known of the end of any one, because the abyss of the divine judgments is not at all penetrated by the eye of the human mind. For we see that that Gentile world which was opposed to God was overspread with the light of righteousness, and that Judæa, long beloved, was darkened with the night of unbelief. We know also that the thief passed from the cross to the kingdom, and that Judas sank into hell from the glory of the Apostleship. And again, because destinies once commenced are sometimes not changed, we know that the other thief arrived at punishment, and that the Apostles enjoyed the appointed kingdom, which they had longed for. Who then can examine in what path light dwells, and what is the place of darkness, to bring each of them to its own bounds, and to understand the paths to the house thereof? I see Paul called from that cruelty of persecution to the grace of Apostleship; and yet he is so alarmed in the midst of secret judgments, as to fear that he be cast away, even after he had been called. For he says,

1 Cor. 9, 27. *I chasten my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, per-*

chance, having preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away. And again, *I count not myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth myself unto those things which are before, I follow the destined mark, to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended.* And it certainly had been already said of him by the voice of the Lord, *He is a chosen vessel to Me;* and yet he still chastens his body, and is fearful of being rejected. Book XXIX. Phil. 3, 13. 14. ibid. 12. Acts 9, 15.

34. Alas for our wretched selves, who have known as yet no voice of God concerning our election, and are still slumbering in ease, as if from security. But there ought, there ought doubtless to be not only security in our hope, but also fear in our conversation, that the one may encourage us in the contest, the other sting us when listless. Whence it is rightly said by the Prophet, *Let them that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord.* As if he were openly saying; He presumes in vain on his hope, who refuses to fear God in his doings. But why is blessed Job questioned on so mighty an enquiry, which is utterly unknown by men, how he understands the end of the just and of the unjust, except that he should turn to his own end, from being unable to understand that of others; and that from being ignorant of his own end, as well as others', he might be afraid at his ignorance, be humbled through his fear; from being humbled might not be elated at his own doings; and from not being elated, might remain stedfast in the citadel of grace? Let it be said then to him, *Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, in what path the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness, that thou mayest take each of them to the bounds thereof.* As if it were said; As thou knowest not who are converted from sin to goodness, nor who turn back from goodness to sin; so also thou dost not understand what is doing towards thyself, as thy merits deserve. And as thou dost not at all comprehend another's end, so art thou also unable to foresee thine own. For thou knowest now what progress thou hast made thyself, but what I still think of thee in secret, thou knowest not. Thou now thinkest on thy deeds of righteousness; but thou knowest not how strictly they are weighed by Me. Woe Ps. 115, 11.

Job 38, 21. even to the praiseworthy life of men, if it be judged without mercy, because when strictly examined, it is overwhelmed in the presence of the Judge, by the very conduct with which it imagines that it pleases Him. Whence it is rightly said Ps. 143, 2. to God by the Prophet, *Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.* Eccles. 9, 1. Whence it is well said by Solomon, *There are righteous and wise men, and their works are in the hand of God: and yet no man knoweth whether he is deserving of love, or of hatred; but all things are kept uncertain for the time to come.* Prov. 20, 24. Hence again it is said by the same Solomon, *What man will be able to understand his own way?* And any one doing good or evil is doubtless known by the testimony of his conscience. But it is said that their own way is not known to men, for this reason, because even if a man understands that he is acting rightly, yet he knows not, under the strict enquiry, whither he is going. After He has alarmed him then with this consideration of his end, He goes back to examine his beginning: and, that he may not complain wherefore knows he not his end, He mentions also that he does not even understand with what beginning he came hither. For it follows;

Ver. 21. *Didst thou know then that thou wast about to be born, and didst thou know the number of thy days?*

xix. 35. As if He were openly saying, What wonder if thou understandest not thine end, since thou dost not comprehend thy beginning? And since thou knowest not with what beginning thou camest hither, what wonder, if thou canst not tell with what end thou art taken away? If therefore it was My work to bring thee forward from secresy to sight at thy beginning, it will be Mine also to bring thee back from sight to secresy. Why complainest thou aught of the dispensation of thy life, who, ignorant of thyself, art supported by the hand of thy Creator? Thou oughtest therefore to boast thyself the less in what thou dost, the more thou art confined within the bosom of eternity, and knowest not either in what order thou camest hither, nor when, or how thou art taken hence.

36. But these words can yet be understood in another sense also; *Didst thou know then that thou wast about to be*

born, and didst thou know the number of thy days? Thou understandest, As I, Who knew that I was about to be born, because, even before the birth of My Manhood, I always existed substantially in the Godhead. For men begin then to exist, when they are born in the womb of their mothers. For even the very conception is called nativity, according to that which is written, *That which is born in her is of the Holy Ghost.* And they therefore know not that they are about to be born, because they do not exist, before they are created. But God, Who ever existed without beginning, foresaw this of Himself, that He assumed a beginning in the womb of the Virgin; and because He foreknew, He ordained it; and because He ordained, He doubtless endured nothing in human form, except of His own free will. Let man then, who could not foresee his own birth, be reproved for complaining of his scourges, if even He, Who foresaw and ordained His own birth, prepared Himself for scourges amongst men. It follows, Book XXIX. Matt. 1, 20.

Ver. 22, 23. *Hast thou entered into the treasures of snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war?*

37. What else must be understood by the 'snow' or 'hail,' but the cold and hard hearts of the wicked? For as charity is designated by warmth, so also in Holy Scripture wickedness is wont to be designated by cold. For it is written, *As a cistern maketh its water cold, so doth its own wickedness make cold the soul.* And again, *Iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold.* What then can be more fitly understood by the cold of snow, or the hardness of hail, than the life of the wicked, which both waxes cold by torpor, and strikes with the malice of hardness? Whose life the Lord yet tolerates, because He keeps them for the probation of His just ones. Whence also He rightly subjoined, *Which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war.* In order that, when our adversary the devil endeavours to tempt us, he may make use of their habits as his weapons against us. For by them he tortures us in his rage, but unwittingly purges us. For they become scourges to our sins, and when we are XX. Jer. 6, 7. Mat. 24, 12.

Job 38, 22. 23. smitten by their life, which is such, we are freed from eternal death. Whence it is so ordered, that even the abandoned life of the reprobate benefits the life of the Elect, and that whilst their ruin furthers our interest, it is thus marvellously ordained, in order that even every thing which is lost, may not be lost to the Elect of God.

38. This also can be understood in another way, so as not to differ from the exposition of the former verse, since it seems connected with the words that precede it. For because He had pointed out that either the good can be changed to sin, or the wicked to goodness, He immediately proceeded to add, *Hast thou entered into the treasures of snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war?* By either cold, or hard, snow, or hail, we understand, as has been said, the hearts of the wicked. But because Almighty God has chosen His Saints from such, and knows how many of the Elect He has still stored up amongst the life of the wicked, He fitly says, that He has His treasures in snow or hail. For 'thesaurus' (treasure) is so called from θέσις, that is, from its being placed away. And He beholds many long concealed in a life of coldness, whom He brings out, when He orders it, and exhibits glittering with the brightness of righteousness, through grace from on high. Ps. 51, 7. For it is written, *Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* And He hides them for a long while beneath the seal of His foreknowledge, prepared against the day of war and of battle, but the moment He brings them out, He strikes the opposing breast of the adversaries, with their words and refutations, as if with hailstones. Whence it is Ps. 18, 12. written elsewhere, *Through the brightness in His presence the clouds passed away, hailstones and coals of fire.* For See S. Aug. ad loc. coals pass away through brightness, because holy preachers traverse the whole compass of the world with the brightness of their miracles. And they are called, moreover, hailstones, and coals of fire; because they both strike with their reproof, and kindle with the flame of charity. The bold reproof of the Saints is also fitly represented by the nature of hail. For hail strikes as it falls, and waters when it melts. But holy men both strike the hearts of their hearers with dread,

and bedew them with comfort. For the Prophet bears witness how they strike, saying, *They shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts, and they shall tell of Thy greatness.* And he has proceeded to subjoin, how they bedew with gentleness; *They shall utter the memory of the abundance of Thy sweetness, and shall exult in Thy righteousness.* Treasures, therefore, are kept in the snow or hail, because many who were frozen in the torpor of iniquity, when taken up unto heavenly grace, shine forth in Holy Church with the light of righteousness, and smite with the blows of their doctrine the evil wisdom of their adversaries. Whence also it is fitly subjoined, *Which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war.* For Saul in truth had been snow or hail through cold insensibility; but he became snow and hail against the breasts of his adversaries, either by the brightness of righteousness, or by the reproof of his keen eloquence. O what a treasure did the Lord keep him, stored up in snow or hail, when He already secretly beheld him as His own Elect, though placed among the life of the wicked. And to smite how many breasts of His adversaries did He grasp in His hand this hailstone, by which He laid prostrate so many hearts which resisted Him. Book XXIX. Ps. 145, 6. ib. 7.

39. Let no one then boast himself of his own deeds; let no one despair of those, whom he sees still cold. For he sees not the treasures of God in snow and hail. For who could believe that that very person, who at his death kept the raiment of all those who stoned, could go before the martyred Stephen through the grace of apostleship? If therefore we refer to these secret gifts, or judgments, while not desparing utterly of any, we do not prefer ourselves in our hearts to those, to whom for a time we have been preferred. For though we now observe how much we have outstripped them, yet we know not how much we may be surpassed ourselves, when they begin the race. It is well, therefore, said to blessed Job, *Hast thou entered the treasures of snow, or hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war?* As if it were openly said, Prefer not thyself to any one, by reason of thy doings; for of these, whom thou beholdest still frozen in sin, thou knowest not Acts 7, 58.

Job 38, 24. what mighty workers of righteousness, and defenders of sound faith I intend to create. But because this is effected by the coming of the Mediator, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 24. *By what way is the light scattered?*

xxi. 40. For He in truth is the way, Who says, *I am the Way,* John 14, 6. *the Truth, and the Life.* The light is, therefore, scattered by this way, because all the Gentile world is enlightened by His presence. But He rightly said, *Is scattered,* because the light of preaching was not contracted or confined, but shone forth with its brightness far and wide by the voices of the Apostles. But because the power of love glows within, when the light of conversion has been received, in order that either our past sins may be anxiously lamented, or future blessings be most ardently sought for, it is suitably added,

The heat is divided over the earth.

xxii. 41. For when the light is spread abroad the heat is divided over the earth; because when righteousness is openly preached, the anxious desire of the heart to seek God is spread forth in the practice of virtues; so that one person shines forth in the word of wisdom, another in the word of knowledge; one is mighty in the grace of healing, another in the working of mighty deeds; and that thus, while they severally receive unequally the gifts of the Spirit, they are all necessarily united to each other, and unanimously inflamed. But after the light is said to be spread abroad, it can readily be understood that persecution is designated by 'heat:' because as the light of preaching shone brightly, so the heat of persecution immediately blazed forth from the hearts of the unbelievers. For, that persecution is described by 'heat,' the discourse of the Lord bears witness, speaking of the seeds which had been cast on the rocky ground, *When the sun arose they were all scorched, and* Matt. 13, 6. *because they had not root, they withered away.* And when He expounded it a little after, He called 'heat,' persecution. The heat therefore is divided over the earth, when the light is spread abroad, because, as the life of the faithful became bright, the cruelty of the faithless was kindled. For the heat was divided, when persecution was raging, now at Jerusalem, now at Damascus, and now in other countries far away. For it is written, *At that time there arose a great persecution* Acts 8, 1.

in the Church, which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria. And it is written again; *Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters for him to take to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he had found any of this way, men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.* Acts 9, 1. 2. Because then persecution had increased, now here, now there, they who had known the light of truth, were panting, as it were, under the burning of the divided heat.

42. But because we have heard blessed Job questioned in the former words, respecting the secret judgment; it now behoves us to examine more accurately this which is said of the scattered light, or divided heat. For he is still examined with lofty questioning, in order that he may at least learn that he is ignorant, and that it may be said to him, *By what way is the light spread, the heat divided over the earth?* For what is designated by the word 'light' but righteousness? Of which it is written; *The people which was sitting in darkness, saw a great light.* Is. 9, 2. But every thing which is scattered, is thrown, not continuously, but with a kind of intermission. And light is therefore said to be 'scattered,' because, though we already behold some things as they really are, yet some things we see not, as they are to be seen. For scattered light had possessed the heart of Peter, who had shone forth with such great brightness of faith, and of miracles, and yet, while he was imposing the weight of circumcision on the converted Gentiles, he knew not what to say aright. Gal. 2, 11—14. Light, therefore, is 'scattered' in this life, because it is not continuously possessed, to the understanding of every thing. For whilst we comprehend one thing as it is, and are ignorant of another, we both see as it were partially in scattered light, and remain partially in darkness. But our light will then no longer be scattered, when our mind, caught up entirely to God, will shine forth.

43. And because it is not known in what ways this light is insinuated into the heart of man, it is rightly said in a question; *By what way is the light scattered?* As if it were openly said; Tell Me, in what order I pour My righteousness into the secret recesses of the hearts, when I am not

Job 38, 24. seen, even in My approach, and yet I invisibly change the visible doings of men, when I irradiate one and the same mind, at one time with this, and at another with that virtue, and yet I permit it, through scattered light, still to remain, in a measure, in the darkness of temptation. Let ignorant man be asked, by what way the light is scattered. As if it were openly said, While I soften the hard hearts, bend the rigid, smooth the rough, warm the cold, strengthen the weak, establish the wandering, confirm the wavering, come, if thou canst, incorporeally, and behold, on what minds I shed this light. For all these things we behold when done; for we know not how they are wrought within. The Truth shews in the Gospel, that this way of light is invisible to us, saying; *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, and knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.*

John 3, 8.

44. But because, when the light is scattered, temptations presently spring up from the hidden adversary against the enlightened mind, it is rightly subjoined; *The heat is divided over the earth.* For the crafty foe strives to inflame with unlawful desires the minds of those whom he sees shining forth with the light of righteousness; so that they frequently feel themselves more assaulted with temptations, than at the time when they beheld not the rays of inward light. Whence also the Israelites, after they had been called, complain against Moses and Aaron of their increasing labour, saying; *Let the Lord see and judge, because ye have made our savour to stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have given him a sword to slay us.* For when they wished to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh had taken away the straw, and yet required works of the same amount. The mind, therefore, secretly murmurs, as it were, against the law, after the knowledge of which it endures sharper stings of temptations, and when it beholds its labours increasing, because it is displeasing to its adversary, it grieves that it stinks, as it were, in the eyes of Pharaoh. Heat, therefore, follows after light; because after the illumination of the heavenly gift, the contest of temptation is increased.

Exod. 5, 21.

45. But the heat is rightly said also to be 'divided:' doubtless, because separate persons are not assailed by all

vices, but by certain ones which are near, and placed close to them. For the ancient enemy first beholds the character[1] of each person, and then applies the snares of temptations. For one person is of a cheerful, another of a morose, another of a timid, another of a proud disposition. Our secret adversary, in order then to catch us easily, prepares deceptions closely connected with our several characters. For because pleasure borders on mirth, he holds out lust as a bait to cheerful dispositions. And because moroseness easily slides into anger, he offers the cup of discord for the morose. Because the timid dread punishments, he threatens terrors to the fearful. And because he beholds the proud elated with praises, he draws them on to whatever he pleases, by flattering applause. He lays snares therefore against men one by one, by vices adapted to them. For he would not easily lead them captive, if he were either to offer bribes to the lustful, or bodily pleasures to the covetous, or if he were to assail the greedy by the pride of abstinence, or the abstinent by gluttonousness, or if he were to seek to seize the gentle by eagerness for the contest, or the angry by the dread of fear. Because then, when in the heat of temptation, he craftily lurks in ambush against each one by himself, and secretly lays the snares which are akin to their habits, it is rightly said; *The heat is divided over the earth.*

Book XXIX.

[1] conspersionem.

46. But when it is first stated, *By what way the light is scattered:* and is there immediately subjoined, *The heat is divided over the earth*, it is doubtless indicated that the heat is also divided by the same way, by which the light is scattered. For when the lofty and incomprehensible grace of the Holy Spirit irradiates our minds with its light, it also so disposes and modifies the temptations of the adversary, that either they do not come upon us many together, or else that those only which can be endured, assail the mind already illuminated by God; so that they do not burn us with the fire of their full strength, when they torture us with the heat of their touch. As Paul bears witness, who says, *But God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* This heat then our crafty supplanter divides in one way, and our merciful

1 Cor. 10, 13.

Job 38, 25. Creator in another. The one divides, in order thereby to slay more speedily; the other, to make it more tolerable. And, because, when we are harassed with temptation, we are not only instructed with the Spirit of God within, but are also assisted with the words of preachers without, after the divided heat, it is rightly added,

Ver. 25. *Who hath given a course for the most violent shower?*

xxiii. 47. But if, as we said before, that persecution in the regions of Judæa is designated by the name of divided heat, because this very fierceness of persecution kept not from their office of preaching, through any fear, the holy preachers, who were assisted by the gift from on high, He fitly subjoins; *Who hath given a course for the most violent showers?* As if He were saying, Except Myself. For to have given a course to the most violent showers, when the heat was divided, is to have strengthened the force of preaching, amid the very difficulties of persecution, in order that the power of preachers might the more increase, the more the cruelty of persecutors stood in their way, so that they might bedew the thirsty hearts of their hearers with drops of rain, and water more abundantly the drought of unbelief; and that though the heat of cruelty was glowing against them, yet the voice of grace might not through them be silent. Paul was both enduring and watering this heat of persecu-

2 Tim. 2, 9. tion, when saying, *I labour even to bonds, as an evil doer, but the word of God is not bound.* Of this shower it is said

Is. 5, 6. elsewhere; *I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* Of this course of the shower which is going on in the hearts of the Elect, the Psalmist witnesses, saying;

Ps. 147, 15. *His word runneth swiftly.* But it is generally a shower only, and has no course; because preaching comes to the ears, but inward grace not acting, it passes not through to the hearts of the hearers. And of the words of this preaching it

Ps. 77, 17. is said, on account of the Elect; *For thine arrows passed through.* For the arrows of God pass through, when the words of His preaching descend from the ears to the hearts. And because this is effected solely by Divine grace, the Lord witnesses that He has given a course to the shower.

48. But I see it must be observed, that He calls this same

shower not 'violent,' but 'most violent.' A violent shower is great force; but a most violent one, is the boundless power of preaching. For it was a violent shower, when holy preachers were advising the belief of eternal joy. But 'most violent,' when they were advising men that on account of their hope their interest should be abandoned, all visible objects despised on account of invisible, and that the pains and tortures of this present world should be tolerated for the sake of the joys they have heard of. But when so many of the Elect, having learned the faith, abandoned their possessions, when the heat of persecution was raging, forgot their carnal affection, and exposed their limbs to torture for joy of spirit; what else did the Lord do, but make a course for even the most violent shower, which by bodily words so watered the invisible recesses of the heart, that it performed even the highest commands? Where it is also fitly subjoined; Book XXIX.

And a way for the sounding thunder?

49. For what is understood by 'thunder' except the preaching of heavenly terror? And when the hearts of men feel this terror, they are shaken. But sometimes by thunder is set forth the Incarnate Lord Himself, Who was brought to our knowledge by the concurrent prophecy of the ancient fathers, as if by the clashing together of clouds; Who, appearing visibly among us, sounded forth awfully those things which were above us. Whence also the Holy Apostles themselves begotten by His grace were called Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder. But sometimes, as has been said, 'thunder' is taken for their preaching, by which the terror of the heavenly judgments is heard. But because any preacher can present words to the ears, but cannot open the hearts, and since, unless Almighty God alone grant the words of preachers a hearing invisibly by inward grace in the hearts of their hearers, that preaching is received in vain by the ear of the hearer, which is prevented by his deaf heart from reaching to his inmost soul; the Lord asserts that He grants a way to the sounding thunder: for when He vouchsafes the words of preaching, He pierces the heart with terror. Paul, the illustrious preacher, when he was awfully sounding forth the heavenly mysteries, seeing that he could not possess xxiv. Mark 3, 17.

Job 38, 26. Col. 4, 3. this way by himself, admonished his disciples, saying, *Withal praying also for us that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ.* He therefore who was speaking mysteries, but was praying for a door to be opened by the Lord for these same mysteries in the heart of his hearers, possessed indeed the thunder already, but was seeking for a way to be granted it from above. John, who

1 John 2, 27. was saying, *Ye need not that any man teach you, but as His anointing teacheth you of all things*, knew that he could not give this way. Paul again taught Who could give this way,

1 Cor. 3, 7. saying, *For neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.* Let us hear then what this shower and thunder effect, when the way has been granted them. It follows;

Ver. 26. *That it should rain upon the earth without man, in the desert, where no mortal dwelleth.*

XXV. 50. To rain upon the earth without man in the desert, is to preach the word of God to the Gentile world. For whilst it retained no worship of the Godhead, and shewed in itself no appearance of good works, it was plainly a desert. And because there was therein no lawgiver, nor any one who could seek God in a reasonable way, there was, as it were, 'no man;' and it remained as if occupied by beasts alone, void of men. Of this land of the desert it is said elsewhere,

Is. 43, 19. *He made a way in the desert.* Of this preaching vouchsafed

Ps. 107, 33. to the Gentiles, the Psalmist witnesses, saying, *He made rivers in the desert.* But we must observe, that after the heat was divided over the earth, the most violent shower received its course, that it might rain in the desert. Because after the harshness of persecution became dreadful in Judæa, so as not only not to receive the faith, but even to assail it with the sword, every preacher who had been sent to Israel, turned aside to summon the Gentiles. Whence the holy Apostles say to the persecuting Hebrews whom they aban-

Acts 13, 46. don, *We ought first to preach the word of God to you, but because ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* When the heat, then, has been divided, the land which is desert, and without man, is watered; because, when the persecution of the faithful had spread abroad in Judæa, the Gentile world,

long since abandoned, and estranged, as it were, from the infusion of reason, is watered by the drops of preaching. But in what state the Gentile world was still found by the preachers, is shewn, when it is added; BOOK XXIX.

Ver. 27. *That it should fill the pathless and desolate land.*

But what it produced when rained on, is shewn, when it is immediately subjoined, *And should produce green herbs.*

51. For the Gentile world, to which a way was not open for the word of God, was a long while pathless. For on the coming of our Redeemer it so received the calling of grace, as that there had not been in it before the way of Prophecy. It is also rightly called desolate; namely, as being destitute of either the wisdom of counsel, or of the fruit of good works. The Lord therefore gave a course to the most violent shower, and a way to the sounding thunder, that it should rain in the desert, and fill the pathless and desolate land, and should produce green herbs. That is, He added to outward preaching inward inspiration; that the parched hearts of the Gentiles might become green, the closed might be opened, the empty filled, the unfruitful germinate. XXVI.

52. For in holy Scripture 'grass' is sometimes taken for the verdure of temporal glory, sometimes for the food of the devil, sometimes for the support of preachers, sometimes for good works, sometimes for the knowledge and doctrine of eternal life. For it is taken for the verdure of temporal glory, as the Prophet says, *Let it pass away in the morning like grass, in the morning let it flourish and pass away.* For to flourish and to pass away in the morning like grass, is in the prosperity of this world for the beauty of temporal glory speedily to dry away. Grass is taken for the food of the devil, as it is said of him by the Lord, *For him the mountains bear grass.* As if He were saying, Whilst proud and haughty men exalt themselves in unlawful thoughts and actions, they feed him with their iniquities. Grass is pointed out to be the support of preachers, when it is said, *He produceth grass on the mountains, and herbs for the service of men.* For grass is produced on the mountains, and herbs for the use of men, when the lofty ones of this world, being called to the knowledge of the faith, bestow on holy preachers, in the journey of this life, food for their sojourn. Ps.90,6. Job 40, 20. Ps. 147, 8. Ps. 104, 14.

Job 38, 27. Allegory. Gen. 1, 11. Grass is put for good works, as it is written, *Let the earth bring forth the green grass.* And though we hold that it thus took place historically in the creation of the world, yet we suppose, without impropriety, the earth to have been a type of the Church, which brought forth the green grass, in that it produced, at the command of God, fruitful works of mercy. We sometimes take 'grass' for the knowledge and doctrine of eternal verdure; as it is said by Jeremiah, *The wild asses did stand on the rocks, they snuffed up the winds as dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass.* By which expression the proud and most wicked persecution of the Jews was prophesied. For they are called in truth wild asses, for their pride of mind, and dragons, for their virulent thoughts. And they stood on the rocks, because they trusted, not in God, but, in the chief powers of this world, saying, *We have no king but Cæsar.* They snuffed up the winds as dragons, because being puffed up by the spirit of pride they were swollen with malicious haughtiness. Their eyes failed, because in truth their hope fell short of that which it was aiming at. For loving temporal things, it neglected to wait for eternal, and lost earthly goods, because it preferred them to God. For they said, *If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation.* They were afraid lest they should lose their place, if the Lord had not been slain, and yet they lost it, when He was slain. But he adds the reason why these things befel the wretched men, *Because there was no grass:* that is, because the knowledge of eternity was wanting in their hearts, and did not refresh them with the food of the verdure of inward doctrine. In this place then what else do we understand by green herbs, but the knowledge of heavenly doctrine, or works in accordance? The desert earth then is watered by the rain, for the green herbs to be produced from it, because when the Gentile world enjoyed the shower of holy preaching, it budded forth with both the works of life, and the herb of doctrine. This verdure is promised to the desert land by the voice of the Prophet, when it is said, *In the dens, in which the dragons dwelt before, shall rise up the verdure of the reed and bulrush.* For what is designated by

Jer. 14, 6.

John 19, 15.

John 11, 48.

Is. 35, 7.

the reed but preachers; and what by the bulrush, which always grows by the moisture of water, but weak and tender hearers of the sacred word? The verdure of the reed and bulrush grows up then in the dens of the dragons, because in those peoples, which the malice of the old enemy used to possess, both the knowledge of teachers and the obedience of hearers is collected together. Book XXIX.

53. But these things which have been stated generally of the Gentile world, we see taking place, if we carefully examine, in individuals within the bosom of Holy Church. For there are many, grievously insensible to the words of God, who are counted under the name of faith, who hear the words of life with their ears, but suffer them not to pass through to the inward places of the heart. What else are these than desert land? Which land in truth has not a man, because their mind is void of the sense of reason. And no mortal dwells in this land, because if thoughts of reasonable meanings ever spring up in their conscience, they do not remain there. For evil desires find a resting-place in their hearts, but if good desires have ever come there, they pass away, as if urged on. But when the merciful God deigns to give a course to His shower, and a way to the sounding thunder, being stung with grace within, they open the ears of their heart to the words of life. And the pathless land is filled: for while it grants a hearing to the word, it is overwhelmed with mystery. And it brings forth green herbs: because when watered by the grace of compunction, it not only willingly receives the words of preaching, but returns them back with abundant increase; so that it is now eager to speak what it could not hear, and that that which had become dry, even within, through not listening, feeds with its verdure as many as are hungry. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, *Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.* For thus, thus, the face of the earth is changed by the virtue of renewal, when the mind which before was dry, is watered by the coming of grace, and is, after its former barrenness, arrayed with the verdure of knowledge, as though by grass which it had brought forth. Which grace of our Creator is commended still more highly, when it is subjoined; Mor. Ps. 104, 30.

Job 38, 28. Ver. 28. *Who is the father of the rain? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?*

Alleg. xxvii. 54. As if He were saying, Except Myself, Who sprinkle, of My free grace, the barren earth of the human heart with drops of knowledge. For of this rain is said elsewhere, Ps. 68, 9. *Thou wilt set apart, O God, a voluntary rain for thine inheritance.* For God sets apart a voluntary rain for His inheritance, because He grants it to us, not for own deserts, but from the bounty of His own benignity. And He is in this place called the father of this rain, for this reason, because His heavenly preaching is begotten in us, not for our merits, but from His grace. For the drops of dew, are the holy preachers themselves, who water the fields of our breast, (parched amid the evils of the present life, as though amid the gloom of a dry night,) with the grace of bounty from Jer. 3, 3. above. Of these drops it is said to obstinate Judah; *Therefore the drops of rains have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain.* For the drops of dew are the same as the drops of rains. For when they soften down their preaching by any accommodation, they sprinkle, as it were, the tender dew. But when they say what they think of heavenly things, with the power with which they are strong, they pour forth, as it were, the flowing rain abundantly. Paul was sprinkling the dew, when saying to the 1 Cor. 2, 2. Corinthians, *For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.* And again he was 2 Cor. 6, 11. pouring forth the rain, saying, *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged.* Hence it is, that Moses, who knew that he would say bold things to the Deut. 32, 2. strong, and gentle to the weak, observed, *Let my speech be waited for as the rain, and let my words descend as the dew.*

But, lo! we have heard with what favour the Gentiles are called, let us now hear with what severity Judah is rejected. We have heard how He cultivates what is desert, and waters what is barren: let us now hear how He casts forth those which seem to be, as it were, within. For He does not so gather His Elect, as not also to judge the reprobate; nor does He so forgive faults to some persons, as not to punish Eccles. 5, 6. them in some also. For it is written, *For mercy and wrath*

come from Him. Whence here also, after He had introduced so many gifts of grace, He conceals not the judgments of His wrath. For it follows; Book XXIX.

Ver. 29. *Out of whose womb came the ice, and the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it?*

55. For what else do we understand by 'frost' or 'ice,' xxviii.
but the hearts of the Jews frozen and bound with the torpor of unbelief? Who formerly by the receiving of the Law, by the keeping of the commandments, by the ministry of sacrifice, by the mysteries of prophecy, were so kept within the bosom of grace, as if within the womb of the Creator. But because, on the coming of the Lord, being hard bound with the frost of unbelief, they lost the warmth of faith and charity, being cast forth from the secret bosom of grace, they came forth like ice from the womb of the Creator. *And the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it?* What else ought 'heaven' to be here understood to mean but the lofty life of the saints? To which heaven it is said, *Give ear, O heaven,* Deut. 32, 1. *and I will speak.* Of which abode it is elsewhere written, *The soul of the just is the seat of wisdom*[a]. Because then God is wisdom, if the abode of God is heaven, and the soul of the just is the seat of wisdom, the soul of the just is certainly heaven. Abraham was heaven, Isaac was heaven, Jacob was heaven. But because the perseentors of the Lord, the high priests of the Jews, who were frozen with the torpor of unbelief, sprang from the race of those ancestors, the frost came, as it were, from heaven, because the frozen herd of unbelievers came forth from the lofty offspring of the saints. For when Caiaphas was born from Abraham, what else was it, but that ice came forth from heaven? Yet this frost the Lord says that He had gendered, for this reason, because He permitted the Jews, whom He Himself naturally created good, to go forth from Him, by a just judgment, frozen through their wickedness. For the Lord is the Author of nature, not of sin. He engendered therefore, by naturally creating, those whom He suffered, by patiently enduring, to remain in sin. And because those hearts of the Jews, which before were

[a] Perhaps Prov. 12, 23. LXX. where it is read, *A prudent man is the throne of sense.* In the Syriac version, *A cautious man is the seat of wisdom.* *Ben.* On Hom. 38, in Ev. they suggest Wisd. 7, 7, or 27.

Job 38, 30. Allegg. tender, and easily penetrated by faith, were afterwards hardened in the obstinacy of unbelief, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 30. *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone.*

xxix. 56. For I remember that I have often taught already that 'waters' are taken for peoples. But by a 'stone,' by reason of its very hardness, the Gentile peoples are sometimes designated. For they themselves worshipped stones. And of Ps. 115, 8. these it is said by the Prophet, *Let them, that make them, become like unto them, and all who trust in them.* Whence John, beholding that the Jews boasted themselves in their pedigree, and foreseeing the Gentiles passing over to the stock of Abraham, by the knowledge of the faith, says, Matt. 3, 9. *Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up sons to Abraham.* Certainly calling 'stones' the Gentiles, who were hardened in unbelief. Because then Judæa first believed in God, while all the Gentile world was remaining in the obstinacy of its unbelief, and because the hearts of the Gentiles were afterwards softened to receive the faith, and the unbelief of the Jews was hardened, it is well said, *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone.* As if He were saying, Those soft hearts of the Jews, easily penetrated by faith, are converted into the insensibility of the Gentiles. For when God in His mercy drew to Him the Gentiles, He repelled Judæa in His wrath. And it came to pass, that as the Gentiles had been at first hardened against the reception of the faith, so, when the Gentiles were afterwards admitted to the faith, was the people of Judæa hardened in the torpor of unbelief. Whence Rom. 11, 30—32. the Apostle Paul says to these very Gentiles, *As ye in times past have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these not believed, in your mercy, that they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.* And accurately considering this his opinion, first concerning the calling of the Jews, and the rejection of the Gentiles, and afterwards concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, and reflecting that he

could not comprehend the secret judgments of God, he subjoined in exclamation, *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are His judgments, and His ways unsearchable.* Whence here also when the Lord was saying of the unbelief of the Jews, *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone,* to shew that His judgments concerning their rejection were secret, He fitly subjoined; BOOK XXIX. Rom.11. 33.

And the surface of the deep is congealed.

57. Because the eye of the human mind does not at all penetrate the incomprehensibleness of the Divine judgment, from a kind of veil of our ignorance having been thrown over it. For it is written, *Thy judgments are a great deep.* Let no one then seek to investigate, why, when one is rejected, another is chosen, or, why, when one is chosen, another is rejected, because the surface of the deep is congealed, and as Paul witnesses, *His judgments are inscrutable, and His ways unsearchable.* XXX. Ps.36,6. Rom.11, 33.

58. But by that which is said, (ver. 29.) *Out of whose womb came the ice, and the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it?* nothing prevents Satan being understood by the frost and ice. For he came forth as if ice from the womb of God, because the teacher of iniquity came forth, frozen with the torpor of sin, from the warmth of His mysteries. He was gendered as frost from heaven, because he was suffered to fall from the highest to the lowest condition, and to go and bind the hearts of the reprobate. And having been fashioned rightly in heaven, when he fell, he bound as frost the hearts of his followers, in the coldness of sin. And what he did amongst men, on coming to the earth, is fully stated, when it is added, *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone.* For by 'waters' peoples are designated, but by a 'stone' the hardness of this very Satan. The waters therefore were hardened after the likeness of a stone, when he came on earth, because men, imitating his wickedness, lost the soft bowels of charity. And because his crafty designs cannot be detected by men who have been led astray, it is rightly subjoined; *And the surface of the deep is congealed.* For one thing lies concealed within him, and another he presents without. For he transforms himself as an angel of MYST.

Job 38, 29. Myst. light, and with his cunning art of deception frequently proposes laudable objects, in order to lead on to unlawful. The surface of the deep is therefore congealed; for while the fair appearance of his persuasion appears, as it were, like solid ice on the surface, his wickedness, lurking in the depth, is not observed.

Mor. 59. But we can understand all these in another sense also, if we enquire into them, in their moral meaning. For whilst Almighty God fashions the minds of men in His fear, He conceives them, as it were, and brings them forth to open virtues, when He advances them onwards. But if they are elated by the virtues they have received, He abandons them. And we often know persons to be smitten by consideration of their sins, to glow with fear of the Divine dread, and, commencing in fear, attain to the highest virtues. But when they are elated by these virtues which they receive, being bound with the snare of vain glory, they return to their former torpor. When God therefore casts off such persons, He rightly says, *Out of whose womb came the ice?* For the ice comes forth, as it were, from the womb of God, when those who had before been warm within, become cold, by reason of the gift of virtue, and, being torpid, seek after outward glory, for the very reason by which they ought to glow with greater warmth to love things within. And whilst one man is powerful in signs, another in knowledge, another in prophecy, and another in mighty works, and seeks by these gifts to please men, he turns all his former inward warmth into torpidity, from loving outward praises. He comes forth therefore as ice from the womb, when, after the favours of gifts, he is separated from the bowels of heavenly compassion. Are not they 'ice,' who in the virtues they receive seek praise from men? And yet they say to the Judge on His coming, when recalling His own gifts to His mind; *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name have done many mighty works?* But He shews how the Lord casts out this ice, saying, *I know you not whence ye are. Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.* The Lord now bears this ice in His womb, because He tolerates it within the bosom of the Church. But He then openly casts it out,

Matt. 7, 22. ib. 23.

when He banishes such from the secret abodes of heaven by the last and public judgment. What is then the plain object of these words, except that Job should be brought down from his lofty virtues, that he should not, in consequence of his former warmth in good living, grow cold through pride, and be repelled and go forth from the womb of the Godhead, by being swollen up within the bosom of his own heart?

60. And because by a righteous judgment He permits haughty minds to go forth to commit sin, from the virtue they have received, it is rightly added, still farther; *And the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it?* For He frequently vouchsafes the knowledge of Holy Scripture, but when he who receives it is elated by this knowledge, he is, by the anger of the strict Judge, so blinded in the Scripture itself, that he no longer sees its inward meaning, from seeking thereby for outward applause; and that, though he could be warm by remaining within, he goes forth and becomes frozen, and that he who before, when easily led to the knowledge of God, remained unfrozen at the top, becomes hardened, and sinks to the bottom. Is not Holy Scripture 'heaven,' which opening to us the day of understanding, illuminates us with the Sun of righteousness, and which, while the night of the present life surrounds us, shines for us with the stars of the commandments. But since there must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest, when the proud mind is kept back from a sound understanding of Scripture, frost is generated from heaven by the judgment of the strict Judge; in order that, when Holy Scripture itself glows in the hearts of the Elect, it may cast forth from itself in a frozen condition, those who proudly seek to know it. For they err in the very point, in which they should have corrected their faults; and while they fall away from the heavenly understanding of the resplendent Word, both hardened themselves, and about to deceive others, they sink to the bottom, as ice, and bind others also. But yet the Lord says that He Himself genders this frost, not because He Himself fashions the minds of the wicked to sin, but because He does not liberate them from sin. As it is written; *I will harden the heart of Pharaoh.* For because

1 Cor. 11, 19.

Exod. 4, 21.

Job 38, 30. Mor. He refused to soften it in His mercy, He plainly announced that He had hardened it in His severity.

61. But, because the image of virtue is retained for the sake of human praise, when the virtue of Divine fear, which has begun, is itself lost, it is rightly subjoined; *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone, and the surface of the deep is congealed.* For waters are hardened by ice at the surface, but remain fluid underneath. And what do we understand by waters but the unstable hearts of the reprobate? For when they are deliberately forsaking virtue, they shew themselves forth, in their hypocrisy, as resolute in good works, and whilst they are inwardly gliding down into sins, they outwardly feign themselves imitators of the holy and resolute. *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone, and the surface of the abyss is bound together*, because their weak and unstable conscience is concealed from men, by a superinduced appearance of sanctity. For when they are inwardly foul in their own sight, they are arrayed before the eyes of others with a kind of comeliness of living.

62. But, lest any one should wish these words of the Lord to be understood in a good sense, we ought to add it, for those also who thus look for it, provided we are not[1] considered to have neglected points which needed to be examined. For it is said in the former verse, *Who is the father of rain? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?* And it is immediately added, *Out of whose womb came the ice? and the frost from heaven who hath gendered it?* If therefore the following sentence is connected with the preceding words with a similar sense, its meaning is clearly laid open without any obstacle of difficulty even in a good sense. For when the earth is watered by rain, the seeds which have been cast in are pressed down more productively. But again, if the rain waters it too immoderately, it changes the richness and virtue of the corn in the stalk. But if the seed which has been thrown in, is after rain checked by the frost, the more it is kept from appearing too quickly above ground, the more productively does it root itself beneath: and the more it is forbidden to grow, the more it is compelled to multiply: because, when it is kept from too early a growth,

[1] perhaps, 'so as we be not.' (dummodo)

being expanded by the slowness of its conception, it is filled more abundantly for fruit. What is meant then by the Lord first speaking of Himself as the father of the rain, but afterwards saying that the ice comes forth from His womb, and declaring that He genders the frost from heaven? Except that He first waters in a wondrous manner the soil of our hearts for the reception of the seeds of the word, by the secret rain of His grace, and that He afterwards keeps it down by the discipline of His secret dispensation, lest it should bring forth too luxuriantly with the virtues it has conceived, in order that the rigor of discipline may likewise bind that which the rain of grace received irrigates, lest it turn its fruit into grass, if it produce its virtues, either before it ought, or more than is necessary. For, frequently, when a good work is displayed before it ought by beginners, it is emptied of the grain of perfection, and while virtues are more exuberant than is necessary, they frequently dry up. Whence the Lord either refuses the desires even of His Elect, before the fit time, or again restrains at the fit time their unlimited progress, lest, if they advance either sooner, or farther, than they ought, they should fall into the defect of pride by the greatness of their proficiency. For when the heart is pricked with compunction after sin, the earth, which had been dry, is watered by the pouring of rain upon it; and when it proposes to abandon its iniquities and to follow after good works, it receives, as it were, seed after the rain. And many persons, when they conceive holy desires, are burning to exercise themselves at once in the sublimest virtues, so that sin may not only not infect their doings, but may not even assail their thoughts. They are still indeed living in the body, but they wish to suffer no further from their connexion with the present life. They seek to aim at inward stability of mind in their intention, but are driven back by interrupting temptations, in order, namely, that they may remember their own infirmity, and may not be elated at the virtues which they receive. And when this is effected by the wonderful constraint of discipline, what else but frost is gendered from heaven over the watered earth? What but ice is produced from the womb of God, when the dispensa-

Job 38, 30. Mor. tion comes forth from its secret place within, and our wills are restrained even in their good desires?

63. Let us see with what ice of discipline Paul (that is, the watered earth) is weighed down, when he says, *To will is present with me, but to perform what is good I find not.* For he who asserts that he has the will, makes known what seeds are even now concealed within him by the pouring of grace upon him. But whilst he finds not to do good, he certainly points out how much ice of the heavenly dispensation weighs on him. Had not this ice pressed their hearts, to whom he was saying, *So that ye cannot do the things that ye would?* As if he were plainly saying, The secret seeds of your heart are now seeking to break forth into fruit, but they are kept down by the ice of the heavenly dispensation, in order that they may afterwards shoot forth more productively, the more patiently they bear the weight of the Divine judgment pressing on them.

Rom. 7, 18.

Gal. 5, 17.

64. And because the hearts of men, since they are unable to break out into those virtues which they desire, are frequently harassed with the stings of temptation, so far as they shrink back from carrying out their intention, but yet repress these same temptations of their thoughts, and fashion themselves, by the habit of discipline in a kind of strictness of living, it is well subjoined; *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone.* Because, though unstable thoughts harass within, yet they do not at all lead to consent in wicked doings. But the mind conceals, under an habitual custom of good living, as if under a kind of exterior hardness, whatever is softened within by the assault of temptation. Whence it is well subjoined; *And the surface of the deep is congealed.* Because, even if an evil thought comes as far as to suggestion, it does not break out into consent, because the superinduced rigour of holy discipline suppresses the fluctuating motions of the mind.

65. But by 'frost' or 'ice' can also be designated the adversity of this present life, which while it keeps down the holy by its asperity, makes them stronger. For while Almighty God permits us to be exercised with annoyances, and carries us on to the condition of a better life by the

intervention of sorrow, He genders with wonderful wisdom the frost and ice over the coming fruit; in order that each of the Elect may endure in this present life, as if in winter, the adversities of winds and frosts, and may exhibit afterwards, as in the serenity of summer, the fruits which he has here conceived. Whence it is said by the voice of the Bridegroom to every soul which is hastening after the whirlwind of this life to those joys of eternity, *Arise, hasten, My beloved, My fair one, and come. For the winter has already passed, the shower has departed and gone.* Sol. Song 2, 10. 11. But because we are relaxed, if prosperity alone attends us, but are the better strengthened for virtues by means of adversities, it is rightly subjoined, *The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone.* For minds, which had softly melted away through prosperities, become firm when hard pressed by adversities. And water is brought to the likeness of a stone, whenever any one who is weak imitates the sufferings of his Redeemer by endurance received from above. For water had, in truth, hardened after the fashion of stone, when Paul, that former impatient persecutor, was saying, *I fill up those things which are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh.* Col. 1, 24.

66. And because persons, when depressed by adversities, guard more carefully their inward gifts, it is rightly added; *And the surface of the deep is congealed.* For joy is wont to lay open the secrets of the mind, and, by laying open, to lose them. But when adversities depress us outwardly, they make us more careful within. After frost then or ice, the surface of the deep is congealed, because our mind is strengthened by adversities, to preserve those deep gifts which it has received. For Isaiah had congealed the surface of his abyss, when he was saying; *My secret to myself, my secret to myself.* Is. 24, 16. marg. Paul had congealed the surface of his abyss, who labouring under so many dangers and adversities, under cover of some one else, speaks of himself, saying; *I have heard secret words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* 2 Cor. 12, 4. And again, *But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or heareth any thing of me.* ib. 6. What then had he done, who, when enduring adversity without, was afraid to open the secrets of his heart, lest he should perchance vent himself in praises;

Job 38, 31. what, but covered the abyss of his inward secrets by a congealed surface? It follows,

Ver. 31. *Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars, the Pleiades, or wilt thou be able to break up the circuit of Arcturus?*

xxxi. Lit. 67. The stars Pleiades, are so called from πλεῖστος, that is, from plurality. But they were made so near to each other, and yet so distinct, that they can be near together, and yet cannot possibly be united, since they are united in nearness, but disunited as to contact. But Arcturus so illuminates the seasons of night, as placed in the axis of heaven, to turn itself in divers ways, and yet never to set. For it does not revolve out of its orbit, but placed in its own position, it inclines to all quarters of the world, though it will never set. What then is it, that man, who was formed from the earth, and placed upon the earth, is questioned as to the government of heaven, that he cannot join together the Pleiades, which he sees were made close to each other and almost united, and that he cannot break up the circuit of Arcturus, though he can behold it almost dissipated by its own rapidity of motion? Is it not, that considering in those His servants, the power of their Creator, he should remember his own weakness, and consider how beyond our comprehension is He, in the very government of His heavenly ministers, Whom he cannot as yet behold in His own majesty?

Myst. 68. But why do we say these things, who are urged by the stimulus of reason, to learn the sense of these words pregnant with mystical meaning? For what else do the shining Pleiades, which are also seven in number, indicate, but all the Saints, who amid the darkness of this present life, illumine us with the light of the Spirit of sevenfold grace, who, from the first beginning of the world, even to its end, sent at divers times to prophesy, are in some degree united, and in some degree separate from each other? For the stars the Pleiades, as was before said, are united to each other in their contiguity, and disunited as to contact. They are situated indeed together, and yet pour forth separately the rays of their light. In like manner all the Saints appearing at different times for the purpose of preaching, are both

disunited in our sight of their person, and united in their intention of mind. They shine together, because they preach One; but they touch not each other, because they are divided by different times.

69. At what different times did Abel, Isaiah, and John appear! They were separated indeed in time, but not in the subject of their preaching. For Abel offered up a lamb in sacrifice, typifying the passion of our Redeemer; of Whose passion Isaiah says; *As a lamb before its shearer He will be dumb, and will not open His mouth.* Is. 53, 7. Of whom John also says; *Behold the Lamb of God; behold, Who taketh away the sins of the world.* John 1, 29. Behold they were sent at different times indeed, and yet agreeing in their thought of the innocency of our Redeemer, they spake of the same Lamb, John by pointing to Him, Isaiah by foreseeing, and Abel by offering; and Him, Whom John set forth by pointing to Him, and Isaiah set forth in his words, Abel held, in signification, in his hands.

70. Because then we have said how the Pleiades accord together concerning the Humanity of our Redeemer, let us now point out how they shine in concord in setting forth the Unity of the Trinity. For David, Isaiah, and Paul appeared at different periods of the world. But yet none of them thought differently from another; because, though they knew not each other in face, yet they had learned one and the same thing by Divine knowledge. For David, in order to set forth God in Trinity as the Creator of all things, said, *Let God bless us, our God, let God bless us.* And for fear he should be considered to have spoken of three Gods, from his mentioning God three times, he immediately added, teaching thereby the Unity of the same Trinity; *And let all the ends of the earth fear Him.* Ps. 67, 6. 7. For by adding not 'them,' but 'Him,' He intimated that the Three whom He had named were One. When Isaiah also was uttering praises of the Unity of the Trinity, he says, in describing the words of the Seraphim, *Holy, Holy, Holy.* Is. 6, 3. But lest he should seem by mentioning 'Holy' thrice, to sever the unity of the Divine Substance, he added, *Lord God of hosts.* Because then he added not 'Lords,' 'Gods,' but 'Lord God,' he pointed out that that Being, Whom he had thrice called Holy, existed as

Job 38, 31. Myst. Rom. 11, 36. One. Paul also, to set forth the operation of the Holy Trinity, says; *Of Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things.* And in order to teach the Unity of this same Trinity, he immediately added; *To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* By adding then not 'to them,' but *to Him*, he made Him known as One in nature, Three in Persons, Whom he had thrice addressed by the same word. The Pleiades therefore are both situated as it were in one place, because they think alike concerning God; and yet they touch not each other, because, as has been said, they are distributed through different periods of this world.

71. Which the Prophet Ezekiel well and briefly describes, who, when saying that he had beheld living creatures of Ez. 1, 9. different kinds, added; *Their wings were joined one to another.* For the wings of living creatures are joined one to another; because though the things which they do are different, yet the voices and the virtues of the Saints are united together in one and the same sense. And though one may be a man, from doing all things rationally, another, who is bold in suffering, may be a lion, from not fearing the adversities of the world; another, from offering himself through abstinence as a living victim, may be a calf; another, from soaring on high on the wing of contemplation, may be an eagle; yet do they touch each other with their wings, whilst they fly, because they are united to each other by the confession of their words, and the accordance of their virtues. But because it belongs to the power of God alone both to join together in the preaching of the faith those who were sent at different times, and to unite in brightness of intention those that were endued with dissimilar virtues, it is rightly said; *Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars, the Pleiades?* As if He said, As I, Who alone fill all things, and Who by filling the minds of the Elect join them in a sense of unity.

72. But by Arcturus, which illumines the night season in its orbit, and never sets, is designated, not the doings of the Saints separately manifested, but the whole Church together, which suffers indeed weariness, but yet does not incline to fall from its own proper position, which endures a circle of toils, but hastens not to set together with time. For Arc-

turus comes not with the night season to the lowest part of the heavens, but even while it is revolving itself, night is brought to a close. Because doubtless, while Holy Church is shaken with numberless tribulations, the shade of the present life comes to an end; and the night passes by, as it continues stationary, because while the Church remains in her own original condition, the life of this mortal state passes away. There is in Arcturus a point for us to observe more carefully. For it revolves with seven stars, and at one time raises three to the highest point, and depresses four to the lowest; at one time raises four on high, and depresses three below. Holy Church also, when she preaches at one time to unbelievers the knowledge of the Trinity, and at another the four virtues, that is, prudence, fortitude, temperance, justice, to believers, changes, as it were, by a kind of rotation in its preaching, the appearance of its position. For when she strips of confidence in their own doings those who boast of their own works, and exalts faith in the Trinity, what else does Arcturus, but elevate three stars, and depress four? And when she forbids some, who have no good works, to presume on their faith, and orders them to work out more earnestly the things which are commanded, what else does Arcturus do, but raise up four stars, and bring down three? Let us see how it elevates three, and depresses four. Behold it is said by Paul to those who were priding themselves on their works in opposition to faith; *If Abraham were justified by works he hath glory, but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.* Let us see how it elevates four and depresses three. Behold it is said by James to those that were boasting of faith in opposition to works; *As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.* Arcturus therefore revolves, because Holy Church turns herself on different sides with skill in preaching, according to the minds of her hearers. Arcturus revolves, because she is whirled round in the tribulations of this night. But the Lord breaks up at last this circuit of Arcturus, because He turns the labours of the Church into rest. Then does He also more entirely join the Pleiades, when He destroys the orbit of Arcturus, because all the Saints are then doubtless joined to each other even in outward appearance,

Book XXIV.

Rom. 4, 2. 3.

James 2, 26.

Job 38, 31. Myst. when Holy Church at the end of this world is released from those labours which she now endures. Let Him say then; *Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades, or wilt thou be able to break up the circuit of Arcturus?* Thou understandest As I, Myself, Who then unite the life of the Saints even in outward appearance, when I bodily dissolve the circuit of the Church Universal. And what man is ignorant that this is the act of Divine power alone? But let man, in order that he may know what he is himself, be constantly reminded what it is that God alone can effect.

73. We have still some other meaning to give of the stars the Pleiades, and Arcturus. For the Pleiades rise from the East, but Arcturus on the side of the North. But wherever Arcturus turns itself in its circle, it presents to view the Pleiades; and when the light of the day is now approaching, the order of its stars is extended. By Arcturus, then, which rises in the quarter of the cold, can be designated the Law; but by the Pleiades, which rise from the East, the grace of the New Testament. For the Law had, as it were, come from the North, which used to alarm those subject to it with such asperity of rigor. For while it was ordering some to be stoned for their faults, others to be punished by the death of the sword, it was, like a frozen region, far removed, as it were, from the light of charity, rather nipping the seeds of its precepts with cold, than nourishing them with warmth. Peter had shuddered at the weight of this oppression, when Acts 15, 10. saying; *Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?* Nor is it any wonder that the Old Testament is set forth by the seven stars of Arcturus, because both the seventh day was held in veneration under the Law, and the vows of the appointed sacrifice were extended through the whole week. But the Pleiades, which themselves are also seven, as we have before said, point out the more plainly the grace of the New Testament, the more clearly we all see, that by it the Holy Spirit enlightens His faithful ones with the light of the sevenfold gift. Wherever therefore Arcturus turns, it presents the Pleiades to view, because by every thing the Old Testament says, the works of the New Testament are announced. For under the text of the letter it conceals the mystery of prophecy. And Arcturus

inclines itself, as it were, and points them out, because while it bends itself to the spiritual sense, the light of sevenfold grace, which is signified thereby, is laid open. And as the light of day approaches, the order of its stars is extended, because after the Truth became known to us by Itself, It released the precepts of the letter from carnal observance.

74. But our Redeemer, coming in the flesh, joined together the Pleiades; because He possessed the operations of the sevenfold Spirit all at once, and abiding in Himself. Of Whom it is said by Isaiah: *There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall grow up from his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill Him.* Of Whom Zechariah says; *Upon one stone are seven eyes.* And again, *And on the golden candlestick seven lamps.* But no man ever possessed all the operations of the Holy Spirit at once, except the sole Mediator between God and man, Whose is the same Spirit, Who proceedeth from the Father[1] before all ages. It is well said, therefore, *Upon one stone are seven eyes.* For, for this Stone to have seven eyes, is to possess at once in operation every virtue of the Spirit of sevenfold grace. For one receives prophecy, another knowledge, another virtues, another kinds of tongues, another the interpretation of tongues, according to the distribution of the Holy Spirit. But no one attains to the possession of all the gifts of the same Spirit. But our Creator, in taking our weakness, because He taught us that by the power of His Godhead He possessed all the virtues of the Holy Spirit at once, doubtless joined together the shining Pleiades. But whilst He joins the Pleiades, He breaks up the circuit of Arcturus. Because, when He made it known that He, having become Man, possessed all the operations of the Holy Spirit, He loosened in the Old Testament the burden of the letter, that each of the faithful may now understand that in the liberty of the Spirit, which he used, amid so many dangers, to serve with fear. Let blessed Job therefore hear; *Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades?* As if it were openly said, Thou canst indeed possess the light of certain virtues, but art thou able to exercise at once all the operations of the Holy Spirit? Behold Me, therefore, uniting

Is. 11, 1—3.

Zech. 3, 9. ib. 4, 2.

1 Tim. 2, 5.

[1] see note at the end of the Book, p. 359.

Job 38, 32. Myst. the Pleiades in all virtues, and be kept from boasting thyself of a few only. Hear what is said, *Or wilt thou be able to break the circuit of Arcturus?* As if it were openly said to him; Even if thou thyself now understandest what is right, canst thou do away by thy power, even in the hearts of others, the labour of grosser understanding? Consider Me therefore, who correct the follies of the carnal, whilst I manifest myself in the foolishness of the flesh, that thou mayest the more bring down these, which thou countest the mightinesses of thy virtues, the more thou canst not apprehend even the footsteps of My weakness. But, because, in the very mystery of the Lord's Incarnation, the light of truth is manifested to some, but the hearts of others are darkened by an offence; it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 32. *Dost thou bring forth the morning star at its time, and dost thou make the evening star to rise over the sons of earth?*

xxxii. 75. For the Father brought forth the morning star in his Gal. 4, 4. season, because, as it is written; *When the fulness of the time was come, God sent His Son born of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that are under the Law.* Who being born of a Virgin, appeared as the morning star, amid the darkness of our night, because, having put to flight the obscurity of sin, He announced to us the eternal morn. But He made Himself known as the morning star, because He arose in the morn from death, and overcame, by the brightness of His light, the hideous darkness of our Rev. 22, 16. mortality. Who[1] is well called by John; *The bright and morning star.* For, appearing alive after death, He became our morning star; because while He furnished us in His own person an instance of resurrection, He pointed out what light comes after. But the Lord makes the evening star to rise over the sons of earth, because He permits Antichrist to hold sway over the unbelieving hearts of the Jews, as their desert demands. And they are therefore justly subjected by the Lord to this evening star, because they chose of their own accord to be the sons of earth. For by seeking after earthly, and not heavenly things, they were so blinded as not to behold the brightness of our morning star; and while they seek for the evening star to rule over them, they are John 5, 43. plunged in the eternal night of subsequent damnation. Hence the Lord says in the Gospel, *I came in My Father's name,*

[1] Oxf. Mss. 'Qui.'

and ye received Me not; another will come in his own name, and him ye will receive. Hence Paul says; *Because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them the operation of error, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but consented to iniquity.* The evening star therefore would never rise over them, if they had wished to be the sons of heaven. But while they seek after visible things, having lost the light of the heart, they are in darkness under the prince of night. BOOK XXIX. ALLEG. 2 Thess. 2,10-12.

76. But if we examine this in a moral sense, we find how it is daily occurring; because both the morning star doubtless rises on the Elect, and the evening star, by God's permission, rules over the reprobate. For there is one and the same word of God in the mouth of the preacher. But while these hear it with joy, and those with envy, they change for themselves the brightness of the morning star into the darkness of the evening. Whilst these humbly receive the voice of holy preaching, they open, as it were, the eyes of the heart to the light of the star. But whilst those feel envy at one who advises them well, and seek not the cause of their salvation, but the glory of boasting, when the evening of their iniquity bursts forth, they close their eyes in the sleep of death. By a secret sentence, therefore, he who is the morning star to elect, is the evening star to reprobate hearers. Because by that holy exhortation, with which the good come back to life, the reprobate perish more fatally in sin. Whence it is well said by Paul; *We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish, to the one the savour of death unto death, but to the other the savour of life unto life.* He saw then that his word, by which he beheld some roused from their iniquity, and others on the contrary lulled to sleep in their iniquity, was both the morning and the evening star to its hearers. And because this takes place by the secret judgment of God, which cannot be comprehended by men in this life, he rightly there subjoined; *And who is sufficient for these things?* As if he were saying; We are sufficient indeed to consider that these things occur, but we are not sufficient to investigate why they occur. Whence also, the Lord in this place, because He had said that the morning star is brought forth for some, but that the evening star rises MOR. 2 Cor. 2, 15. 16.

Job 38, 33. Mor. for others, that man might not dare to scan the secret judgments of God, immediately subjoins;

Ver. 33. *Knowest thou the course of heaven, and wilt thou set down the reason thereof on the earth?*

xxxiii. 77. To know the course of heaven, is to see the secret predestinations of the heavenly disposals. But to set down the reason thereof on the earth is to lay open before the hearts of men the causes of such secrets. To set down, namely, the reason of heaven on the earth, is either to examine the mysteries of the heavenly judgments, by consideration, or to make them manifest in words. Which certainly no one can do who is placed in this life. For, to pass from little to greater things, who can understand what is the secret reason, that a just man frequently returns from a trial, not only unavenged, but even punished besides, and that his wicked adversary escapes, not only without punishment, but even victorious? Who can understand why one man, who plots for the deaths of his neighbours, survives, and another, who would be likely to preserve the lives of many, dies? One man, who is only eager to do hurt, attains the height of power, another only desires to defend the injured, and yet he himself is lying under oppression. One man wishes for leisure, and is involved in innumerable occupations, another wishes to be engaged in employments, and is compelled to be disengaged. One beginning badly is drawn on from worse to worse, even to the end of his life; another beginning well, proceeds through a long period of time to the increase of his merits. But, on the other hand, one, who is an evil liver, is spared for a long time, in order that he may improve; but another seems to be living properly, but continues in this life till he breaks out into evil ways. One, who has been born in the error of unbelief, perishes in his error; another, who has been born in the soundness of the Catholic faith, is perfected in the soundness of the Catholic faith. But, on the other hand, one, who has come forth from the womb of a Catholic Mother, is swallowed up, at the close of his life, in the gulph of error, but another terminates his life in Catholic piety, who, born in misbelief, had sucked in the poison of error with his mother's milk. One both wishes, and is able, to aim at the loftiness of holy living; another is neither willing nor able. One wishes, and is not able; another is able, and is not willing. Who then

can examine into these secrets of the heavenly judgments? Who can understand the secret balance of hidden equity? For no one attains to understand these recesses of secret judgments. Let this be said then to a man, that he may learn his own ignorance; let him know his own ignorance, that he may fear; let him fear, that he may be humbled; let him be humbled, that he may not trust in himself; let him trust not in himself, that he may seek for the assistance of his Creator, and that he who is dead from trusting in himself, may seek the assistance of his Maker, and live. Let the righteous man, then, who knows himself indeed, but who still knows not those things which are above him, hear the words, *Knowest thou the course of heaven, and wilt thou set down the reason thereof upon the earth?* That is, Dost thou comprehend the secret courses of the heavenly judgments, or art thou able to disclose them to the ears of men? Blessed Job therefore is questioned concerning his investigation of the incomprehensible judgments, as if it were plainly said to him, All things which thou sufferest, thou oughtest to endure the more patiently, the more, in thy ignorance of heavenly secrets, thou knowest not why thou sufferest them.

Note to p. 355.

St. Gregory speaks here of our Lord as Man, and therefore naturally mentions only the Procession from The Father. Elsewhere he uses the same language with the later Latin Church very distinctly, though there is nothing to shew that he does it in any sense which the more candid Greeks would not allow. We have had already in Mor. i. §. 30. p. 48. the expression, "He bestowed the Holy Spirit, Which proceeds from Himself, upon the hearts of His disciples," and in Mor. xxvii. §. 34. p. 224, an implication to the same effect. In Dial. ii. near the end. Ben. p. 275. Lat. 276, we have, "Whereas it is acknowledged that the Paraclete Spirit ever proceeds from the Father and the Son, why saith the Son, that He will depart, that He may come Who never departs from the Son?" which stands at present in the Greek, "ever proceeds from the Father, and abides in the Son." John Diaconus accuses the Greeks of having falsified Pope Zachary's version. See also p. 375 of this volume. Hom. in Ev. xxvi. p. 1554. B. he has, "Although 'to be sent' may also be understood after the nature of the Godhead. For thereby is the Son said to be sent by the Father, in that He is begotten (generatur) of the Father. For the Holy Spirit also, Who being coequal with the Father and the Son, yet was not Incarnate, the same Son declareth Himself to send, saying: *When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father.* (John 15, 26.) For if to be sent must be understood merely to be Incarnate, the Holy Spirit doubtless would by no means be said to be sent, who was not at all Incarnate. But His 'being sent' is the very Procession whereby He proceeds from the Father and the Son. As therefore

the Spirit is said to be sent because He proceeds; so also is the Son not unfitly said to be sent because He is begotten." Which is quoted by Theodulfus, in the 8th century, and could not have been interpolated by simply adding of 'And the Son,' as the context requires those words.

St. Augustine uses sometimes rather the Greek, sometimes rather the Latin way of speaking; the two, fairly understood, not being contradictory. See Enchiridion, §. 3. Tr. p. 90. (where the reading is doubtful) and note g.

Tertullian, against Praxeas, c. iv. has, 'I consider the Spirit not to be other-whence than from the Father, by the Son:' and c. viii. 'The Spirit is Third from God and (qu. 'of,' *ex* for, *et?*) the Son, as the fruit is of (ex) the tree, third from the root, and the stream, of (ex) the river, third from the Fountain, and the point, of (ex) the ray, third from the sun.' Similarly St. Athanasius explains Ps. 36, 9. *In Thy Light shall we see Light*, because 'the Son in the Father, is the Fountain of the Spirit.' De Inc. et contr. Ar. §. 9. Ben. p. 877. St. Hilary De Trin. viii. 20. allows liberty of language as to whether the Spirit is of the Father or the Son, but says that His very Procession from the Father is 'receiving that which is the Son's,' by which he seems to mean, participation of that essence which is *already* the Son's. This doctrine is what the Greeks would allow, but one which seems also to bear out the Latin form of expression, and to be in fact what is commonly meant by those who make use of it. Thus Petavius De Trin. vii. 3. §. 8, on a passage of St. Cyr. Al. Thes. c. 34. t. v. p. 345. "When therefore the Holy Ghost, become within us, makes us conformed to God, and proceeds from the Father and the Son; it is plain that It is of the Divine Essence (or Substance), Essentially (or substantially) in It and from It proceeding. As in fact is the breath that flows forth from the mouth of man, to use a poor illustration." "This Procession of the Holy Spirit," says Petavius, "can be supposed no other than that Essential, in which He is said to proceed from the Father and the Son, ἐκ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ, as he presently explains it, 'Essentially from It proceeding,' making it the same to proceed from the Father and the Son, as to proceed from the Essence of the Father and the Son." He cites other passages of St. Cyril. St. Leo seems to imply the same doctrine, Ser. 2 de Pentec. where, in explaining John xvi. 13, he says, "What the Spirit receives, the Father giving, the Son gives."

The doctrine of St. Basil was a subject of dispute in the Council of Florence, the question turning much on the reading of a passage in book 3, against Eunomius, §. 1, in which according to some copies the Spirit is said to 'have His Being of the Son.' The Benedictines argue that this must have been his meaning, at any rate, from the argument at the end of book 2, against Eunomius ascribing the Spirit to the Son *only*, as His creature, whereas He is truly the Spirit of the Father and the Son. He also in other places speaks of the Holy Spirit as related to the Son as the Son is to the Father; not, of course, strictly. De Sp. S. §. 43. t. iii. p. 36.

That the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father, is acknowledged by all, and hence it is very natural that many should never have written so distinctly on the point as to say whether He is of the Son in the sense of *from* the Son. St. Epiphanius, however, Ancorat. 67, has, But if Christ is believed to be of the Father, God of God, and the Spirit of (ἐκ) Christ, or from (παρὰ) Both; as Christ says, *Which proceedeth from the Father, and He shall take of Mine*." And Hær. lxxiv. 7. "And the Holy Spirit is from (παρὰ) Both, Spirit from (ἐκ) Spirit." St. Greg. Nyss. end of B. 1, against Eunom. says, that the Son is "viewed as prior to the Spirit in order of causation," which comes to the same point. See Petavius l. c., Leo Allat. Gr. Orthod., Forbes Inst. Hist. Theol. vi. Pearson on the Creed, Art. viii., adds further testimony to the Latin doctrine.

LIBRARY OF THE FATHERS.

PUBLICATION OF THE ORIGINAL TEXTS.

THE plan of publishing some at the least of the originals of the Fathers, whose works were translated in the "Library," has been steadily kept in view from the first, and Collations have now been obtained, at considerable expense, at Rome, Paris, Munich, Vienna, Florence, Venice, and the Editors have materials for the principal works of S. Chrysostom, for S. Cyril of Jerusalem, S. Macarius, Tertullian, and S. Augustine's Homilies on the Psalms. Collations are also being made for S. Gregory of Nyssa.

Of these, they have begun with S. CHRYSOSTOM on St. Paul, the Rev. F. Field, M.A. Trin. Coll. Cambridge, having united with them in this great task. He has already edited the Homilies on the 2d Ep. to the Cor., is now carrying through the press those on the 1st Ep. (some of the materials for which arrived at a later period,) and then intends to proceed to the Homilies on the Ep. to the Rom.

All the best MSS. known in Europe have been collated for this edition, and the text has been considerably improved, as that of the Homilies on S. Matthew had already been by the same Editor *. There is then every prospect that the English Edition of S. Chrysostom will be again the best extant.

All the extant European MSS. have likewise been collated for S. CYRIL of JERUSALEM and TERTULLIAN. Of these S. CYRIL is nearly ready for the press.

The publication of Tertullian has been delayed, because it was discovered that the result of the collations would be to make the text more genuine, yet more difficult than before. M. Heyse, who was collating for the Editors at Rome, being requested to search for the MS. or MSS. which F. Ursinus alleged that he had used, discovered the original papers of Ursinus, in which it appeared that the readings which Rigaltius adopted from him, were in fact only ingenious conjectures by Ursinus himself, which he gave out as collations of MSS. The Editor of the treatises of Tertullian already translated, being thus thrown back upon the older text, found reason to think that in those cases the readings, which Ursinus had corrected, although at first sight obscurer, were (he believes with one exception) the more genuine.

With regard to S. Augustine, there seemed reason to think that there was very little or nothing left to be done for the improvement of the text after the admirable labours of the Benedictines. Some collations which the Editors obtained, through their laborious Collator, from very ancient MSS. of his Epistles at Monte-Cassino, confirmed this impression. And this is again renewed by some Collations on the Psalms, which the same Scholar has made for them from a very ancient Codex rescriptus in the

* Mr. Field's edition of the Homilies on S. Matthew is supplied to Subscribers to the Library at the same reduced rate as the other volumes. [*Publisher.*]

Vatican. Still, besides the improvement of the text of any Father, if possible, the Editors had the distinct object of making single valuable works accessible to Clergy who could not afford to purchase his whole works. They, therefore, propose to publish S. Augustine's Homilies on the Psalms, since they are not only a deep and valuable Commentary on a portion of Holy Scripture, which forms so large a part of our public devotions, but contain, perhaps, more of his practical theology and hints as to the inward spiritual life, than most of his works. Besides the above Vatican MS, Collations are being made of some of the Bodleian MSS, which have not been used, since even an occasional improvement of the collocation, or still more occasional of the text itself, is not without interest in a work of such exceeding value.

Large Collations had been made for S. Macarius, and it seemed almost ready for publication, when their indefatigable Collator, M. Heyse, discovered in the Vatican an entirely different recension. In accordance with the rules of the Vatican, access was, upon this, denied them to all MSS. whatever of S. Macarius, and the edition has consequently been, for the time, suspended.

For S. Gregory of Nyssa considerable preparations have been made, although nothing is yet ready for the press.

For these undertakings, the Editors have only their private resources, (any profits from the translations having been much more than absorbed by the Collations.) The present number of Subscribers to the original texts is only 416. Works printed in England have, owing to the expense of labour here, but a limited circulation abroad. If then it is wished that the publication of the originals should proceed more rapidly, there must be additional Subscribers.

DEDICATED (BY PERMISSION)

TO HIS GRACE THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

A

LIBRARY OF FATHERS

OF THE

HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH,

ANTERIOR TO THE DIVISION OF THE EAST AND WEST.

TRANSLATED BY MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH,
WITH NOTICES OF THE RESPECTIVE FATHERS, AND BRIEF NOTES BY THE EDITORS,
WHERE REQUIRED, AND SUMMARIES OF CHAPTERS AND INDICES.

EDITED BY

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THE REV. JOHN KEBLE, M.A.
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A PUBLICATION, answering to the above title, appeared to the Editors calculated to answer many and important ends, and to supply considerable wants, some peculiar to our own Church and times, others more general.

Their chief grounds for thinking it very desirable were such as the following:—

1. The great intrinsic value of many of the works of the Fathers, which are, at present, inaccessible, except to such as have large libraries, and are *familiar* with the languages in which they are written; and this the more, since a mere general acquaintance with the language will not enable a person to read with ease many of the Fathers. E. g. Knowledge of Latin alone will not suffice to read Tertullian: and in cases less strong, ecclesiastical language and peculiarity of style will often present considerable difficulties at first.

2. The desirableness of bringing together select works of different Fathers. Many who would wish to become acquainted with the Fathers, know not where to begin; and scarcely any have the means to procure any great number of their works. Editions of the *whole* works of a Father, (such as we for the most part have,) are obviously calculated for divines not for private individuals: they furnish more of the works of each Father than most require, and their expense precludes the acquisition of others.

3. The increased demand for sacred reading. The Clergy of one period are obviously unequal to meet demands so rapid, and those of our day have additional hindrances, from the great increased amount of practical duties Where so much is to be produced, there is of necessity great danger that

much will not be so mature as, on these subjects, is especially to be desired. Our occupations do not leave time for mature thought.

4. Every body of Christians has a peculiar character, which tends to make them look upon the system of faith, committed to us, on a particular side; and so, if they carry it on by themselves, they insensibly contract its limits and depth, and virtually lose a great deal of what they think that they hold. While the system of the Church, as expressed by her Creeds and Liturgy, remains the same, that of her members will gradually become contracted and shallow, unless continually enlarged and refreshed. In ancient times this tendency was remedied by the constant living intercourse between the several branches of the Catholic Church, by the circulation of the writings of the Fathers of the several Churches, and, in part, by the present method--translation. We virtually acknowledge the necessity of such accessions by our importations from Germany and America; but the circumstances of Germany render mere translation unadvisable, and most of the American Theology proceeds from bodies who have altered the doctrine of the Sacraments.

5. The peculiar advantages of the Fathers in resisting heretical errors, in that they had to combat the errors in their original form, before men's minds were familiarized with them, and so risked partaking of them; and also in that they lived nearer to the Apostles.

6. The great comfort of being able to produce, out of Christian antiquity, refutations of heresy, (such as the different shades of the Arian:) thereby avoiding the necessity of discussing, ourselves, profane errors, which, on so high mysteries, cannot be handled without pain, and rarely without injury to our own minds.

7. The advantage which some of the Fathers (e. g. St. Chrysostom) possessed as Commentators on the New Testament, from speaking its language.

8. The value of having an ocular testimony of the existence of Catholic verity, and Catholic agreement; that truth is not merely what a man *troweth*: that the Church once was one, and spake one language; and that the present unhappy divisions are not necessary and unavoidable.

9. The circumstance that the Anglican branch of the Church Catholic is founded upon Holy Scripture and the agreement of the Universal Church; and that therefore the knowledge of Christian antiquity is necessary in order to understand and maintain her doctrines, and especially her Creeds and her Liturgy.

10. The importance, at the present crisis, of exhibiting the real practical value of Catholic Antiquity, which is disparaged by Romanists in order to make way for the later Councils, and by others in behalf of modern and private interpretations of Holy Scripture. The character of Catholic antiquity, and of the scheme of salvation, as set forth therein, cannot be appreciated through the broken sentences of the Fathers, which men pick up out of controversial divinity.

11. The great danger in which Romanists are of lapsing into secret infidelity, not seeing how to escape from the palpable errors of their own Church, without falling into the opposite errors of Ultra-Protestants. It appeared an act of especial charity to point out to such of them as are dissatisfied with the state of their own Church, a body of ancient Catholic truth, free from the errors, alike of modern Rome and of Ultra-Protestantism.

12. Gratitude to ALMIGHTY GOD, who has raised up these great lights in the Church of Christ, and set them there for its benefit in all times.

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1. The subjects of the several treatises to be published shall mainly be, Doctrine, Practice, Exposition of Holy Scripture, Refutation of Heresy, or History.

8. The Editors hold themselves responsible for the selection of the several treatises to be translated, as also for the faithfulness of the translations.

11. The originals of the works translated shall be printed*. It would be well, therefore, if Subscribers would specify, if they wish for the originals, either with or without the translations.

12. It is understood that subscriptions continue, until it be intimated that they are discontinued, and that they extend, under ordinary circumstances, to the end of each year.

14. Not more than four volumes to appear for each year: the price to Subscribers *not to exceed 9s.* for a closely printed 8vo of 400 pages; to the public it will be raised one-fourth. When old Translations are revised, the price will be diminished.

* *The object of publishing the originals has been steadily kept in view, though delayed by difficulties, inseparable from the commencement of such an undertaking, as well as by sorrowful dispensations. Collations of MSS. at Rome, Paris, Munich, Vienna, Florence, Venice, have now been in part obtained, in part are being made, for S. Chrysostom's Homilies on S. Paul, on the Statues, S. Cyril of Jerusalem, Macarius, Tertullian, S. Greg. Nyss. &c.*

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